

Florin Japanese American Citizens League
Oral History Project

Oral History Interview
with

MARGARET GUNDERSON
(Transcript not used)

MARGERY AND WAYNE FIELD

June 14, 1997
Lodi, California

By Frank Iritani and Kinya Noguchi

Florin Japanese American Citizens League
and
Oral History Program
California State University, Sacramento
Sacramento, California



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

FLORIN CHAPTER • PO Box • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95829-2634

PREFACE

In the summer of 1987, a small group of people from the Florin JACL met at Mary and Al Tsukamoto's home to plan a new project for the organization. Because of the unique history of Florin, we felt that there were special stories that needed to be preserved. The town of Florin, California was once a thriving farming community with a large Japanese American population. The World War II internment of persons of Japanese ancestry living on the west coast, devastated the town and it never recovered. Today there is no town of Florin; it has been merged into the larger county of Sacramento. Many Japanese Americans who reside throughout the United States, however, have their origins from Florin, or have relatives and friends who once had ties to this community. The town may no longer exist, but the spirit of the community continues to survive in people's hearts and memories.

Several hours have been devoted to interviewing former Florin residents. The focus of the interviews was on the forced internment and life in the relocation camps, but our questions touched on other issues. We asked about their immigration to the United States from Japan, pre-war experiences, resettlement after the war and personal philosophies. We also wanted to record the stories of the people left behind. They were friends and neighbors who watched in anguish as the trains transported the community away.

We have conducted these interviews with feelings of urgency. If we are to come away with lessons from this historic tragedy, we must listen to and become acquainted with the people who were there. Many of these historians are in their 70's, 80's and 90's. We are grateful that they were willing to share their experiences and to answer our questions with openness and thoughtfulness.

We owe special thanks to James F. Carlson, former Assistant Dean of American River College and to Jackie Reinier, former Director of the Oral History Program at California State University in Sacramento. Without their enthusiasm, encouragement and expertise, we never could have produced this collection of oral histories. We also wish to acknowledge the project members, volunteers, the Florin JACL which contributed financial support, Sumitomo Bank for their corporate donation, and the Taisho Young Mens Association which contributed some of their assets as they dissolved their corporation on December 31, 1991.

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

INTERVIEWERS

KINYA NOGUCHI was a Sacramento County Deputy Sheriff and retired with the rank of Lieutenant. He is a member of VFW Nisei Post 8985 and Sacramento JACL. He graduated from Sacramento State University in Business Administration and did graduate work in Public Administration. Mrs. Gunderson was his teacher at Tri-State High School, Tule Lake. A native of Kent, Washington, he is married to Helen Nakamura (also Tule Lake internee) and resides in Sacramento. They have two children and three grandchildren.

FRANK IRITANI was born in Denver, Colorado, a retired Christian Minister and Social Service Worker. He is a member of the Sacramento Nisei VFW Post 8985 and JACL 1000 Club, Florin Chapter. He has B.A. Degree from University of Minnesota and B.D. Degree from Pacific School of Religion, married to Joanne Ono and blest with three children and five grandchildren. Joanne is a former Poston, Arizona Relocation Center internee and Frank is a non-internee.

INTERVIEW TIME AND PLACE

June 14, 1997

Home of Wayne and Margery Gunderson Field

2043 Gateway Circle

Lodi, California 95240

TRANSCRIBING AND EDITING

Heidi Sakazaki, Member, Florin JACL, transcribed the tapes of the interview. Wayne and Margery Gunderson Field, Frank Iritani and Kinya Noguchi edited the transcript.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Dan Inouye, Member, Florin JACL, reproduced some of the photographs.

TAPES AND INTERVIEW RECORDS

Copies of the bound transcript and the tapes will be kept by the Florin Japanese American Citizens League and in the University Archives at the Library, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, California 95819.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

MARGARET CROSBY GUNDERSON

MARGARET CROSBY GUNDERSON was born in a sod hut in 1903 in Gronna, North Dakota and died June 27, 1997 in Lodi, California at age 94. She received the AA degree from Fargo Agricultural and Commerce College, graduated from Valley City Normal College in 1928 and received the Masters Degree from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo in 1962.

She married Martin P. Gunderson in Golden Valley, North Dakota where he was Superintendent of Schools. Their only child, Margery Ann, was born August 21, 1925 in Valley City.

Margaret Gunderson's inspirational and dedicated teaching career covered forty years in elementary and high schools in North Dakota, Oakland, Tri-State High School for Interned Japanese Americans in Tule Lake, California Relocation Center, and the largely migrant, Hispanic West Side School District at Five Points, west of Fresno, and Fresno County Juvenile Hall for Girls. She taught English, History, Social Studies and Speech. Her special love was encouraging students who needed help and the school day ended when help was no longer needed.

Her message for the Japanese American students at Tule Lake was that the government made a mistake in putting them into the camps, but the Constitution was still right. America was their country and they are legal U. S. Citizens. She identified closely with them saying, "I am a Nisei." (of European immigrant parents) when she lived in the Internment Center.

Many of her students went on to college and university and became professionals--teachers, professors, doctors, scientists. She kept up friendly contacts with them and a few visited her. Perhaps, the most illustrious was Dr. Yuzuru John Takeshita, Professor Emeritus, University of Michigan. He was a very special friend and there is a separate section about him in this Oral History book.

She had a close relationship with her daughter, Margery Field, who was outstanding in supporting her parents while they were at Tule Lake and at Five Points. There is a separate section in this Oral History book on Margery also.

Margaret's influence and guidance was not confined only to students and classrooms. She was president of PTA, presented book reviews, was historian of Delta Kappa Gamma, president and life member of the Methodist Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS) of her church, directed many 8th grade graduation exercises, supported immigrant causes and was a life-long Democrat.

NOTE: The Oral History interview of Margaret Gunderson was held in a Lodi nursing home a few weeks before her death. The transcription is omitted because of unreliability.

Among her papers, letters and documents bequeathed to CSUS¹ Archives, Japanese American Collections, are a couple of lengthy, handwritten compositions, from which the following excerpts are taken:

"No teaching experience can compare with the joy and satisfaction of work in Tule Lake." --From the last page of "Yellow Peril," 25 pages, undated.

The following are from "Relocation," 24 pages, undated, reproduced and located in another part of this book:

"Our present culture has been seasoned by all the gifts of our immigrants and thereby gives us diversity and richness unsurpassed by any nation." (Opening paragraph)

"You see there was prejudice against Orientals before the Japanese arrived here." (Page 4)

"By 1924, prejudice was rampant and Congress passed the Japanese Exclusion Act. That action was a direct insult to Japan and they felt disgraced before the world." (Presaging World War 11, Page 7)

"My husband and I were Nisei (of Norwegian and English immigrants), Margery is Sansei." (Page 18)

"When the call came for teachers at Tule Lake, we responded." (Page 18)

"Pupils I still hear from directly or indirectly" (A list of nine which includes Yuzuru John Takeshita, Harry Kajihara, etc. Page 24)

"No teaching experience was so satisfying." (Last page)

¹ California State University, Sacramento

No teaching experience can compare with the joy and satisfaction of work in Tule Lake.

Carey G. Williams book Prejudice helped bring the ~~Californians~~ ^{Japanese} back to California.

Again I say its an ill wind that blows a good - the Japanese Americans are accepted now, but the scars of their internment are still present. How well they hide their hurt!

God created man and the Bible doesn't say that man was white or yellow or black. It just says he created man in His image. We better respect all of God's images and keep America - the last best hope of the world - the Land of Promise.

Two Awards For Aid To Migrants Are Presented

Another Story on Page 1-B.
McClatchy Newspapers Service

FIVE POINTS — Approximately 200 persons attended a dual presentation of awards

for county and individual efforts to aid migrant families in the fields of health and education at a dinner last night in the Westside School.

One of the awards, a cup presented by the International Union for Health, Education of the Public, in Rome, Italy, was won last summer by the county for its work in extending health facilities and education to the agricultural families of the West Side.

The presentation was made by Mrs. Anna Haynes, the director of the bureau of health education of the state department of public health, Berkeley, on behalf of the international organization. It was accepted by T. L. O'Neill, the chairman of the Fresno County Rural Health and Education Committee, who in turn gave it to Dr. Robert D. Monlux, the county health officer.

The cup will be shade with

Continued on page 4-D, col. 3



RECOGNITION—A cup awarded to Fresno County by the International Union for Health Education of the Public in Rome, is presented by Mrs. Anne Haynes, representative of the organization. Receiving the cup is T. L. O'Neill, the chairman of the Fresno County Rural Health and Education Committee, who in turn presented it to Dr. Robert D. Monlux, the county health officer.

Gutscher Photos



HONORED—Martin P. Gunderson, the principal of the Westside School, receives the Marshall Field award for outstanding contribution to the well being of children in the field of education from Mrs. Nina Teilman of Selma at Five Points dinner.

Two Awards For Aid To Migrants Are Presented

Continued from page 1-A
27 other winners of the award in the United States, but is on display first in Fresno County.

The other award was the Marshall Field award for outstanding contribution to the well being of children in the field of education, which went to Martin P. Gunderson, the principal and district superintendent, of the Westside School.

The dinner was held to review the progress of the rural health and education committee, and was held in the cafeteria of the school. Members of the homemaking class, one of the program's projects, served the meal.

Representatives of the agencies which are members of the committee, including the Boy and Girl Scouts, the community clinic, and others, reported on accomplishments of the program, which is a continuing project to improve conditions for agricultural workers and their families.

O'Neill opened the meeting, and turned the program over to the meeting chairman, Ray Provost, vice president of the Producers Cotton Oil Company.



COMPOSITION
BOOK

No. 956-48

H. S. CROCKER COMPANY, INC.



Margaret Gunderson

Relocation

Our nation is truly a melting pot of the Earth. Every nationality is represented here. Each immigrant group brought its culture, which involved patterns of behavior, songs, dances, literature, skills, and arts. Our ~~present~~ ^{present} culture has been seasoned by all the gifts of our immigrants and thereby gives ^{us} diversity and richness unsurpassed by any nation.

Each group that came faced discrimination and prejudice ~~depending upon the community in which the group settled.~~ There was the tendency of groups to live close to one another. Consequently our cities had "Little Italies", Frenchtown, Polacktown, ^{Little Tokyo} Japantown, & could go on indefinitely. We even have states settled predominantly by foreign group - the Germans in Wisconsin; the Swedes in Minnesota.

It was only natural for the Orientals to cling together. The first Orientals ^{to} immigrate came during ^{the} Gold Rush. They were poor, ^{Chinese} but they brought with them a culture centuries old & were catapulted into Calif at a time when bold ~~men~~ came for gold - came

from a multitude of cultures into an area which was unsettled - really a frontier. There were law-abiding miners, ^{crooks} & desperados plus vigilantes. You can imagine how bewildered the Chinese were because there were no fixed patterns of behavior.

Now they were in a lawless frontier in their coolie clothes, pigtailed and strange language. From the start, they were suspect. When gold fields diminished in yield, you can guess who felt the pressure first. In 1850 & 1852 the state passed Foreign Miners' License laws, the first law ^{against them} in the first year Calif. was a state. The laws were ^{aimed} ~~assumed~~ at the highly skilled Mexican miners and the Chinese. After obtaining licenses - a time-consuming task - especially with a language handicap, the Chinese were allowed to work in the poorest areas or were chased out completely.

They turned to farming their skill & diligence put the white farmer to shame. There were incidents of cruelty & injustice, but in 1854, Calif. passed a law which forbade a Chinese the right to testify against a Caucasian. The Chinese

simply had no legal recourse or protection. Not many came here then.

In 1866 the Transcontinental R.R. was started by the Union Pacific & the Central Pacific. From the Mississippi tracks were laid by hundreds of Irish immigrants & Civil War Veterans. The Central Pacific, starting from Sacramento had the almost overwhelming task of crossing the Rocky Mts. I guess someone thought of the Great Wall of China - Anyway a horde of Chinese coolies ~~was~~ ^{were} imported - to blast tunnels thru the mts, cut the grades - span the gorges with bridges & lay the tracks.

Histories: a dead Irishman for every tie laid across the plains. How many dead coolies? No one knows - hundreds perished in avalanches caused by blasting. They were buried ^{in snow} standing up - they perished in the blasting and the bridge building across yawning chasms.

In May, 1869, when the road was finished, but 15,000 were lucky to be alive.

Accidentally the U.S. govt was generous with the railroad owners - It gave them ^{the right of way} all the timber, earth, & stone needed - 20 sections of land for each mile completed & a bonus of \$16,000 to \$48,000 for each mile.

Depression in 1870 - Denis Kearney an Irish immigrant in S. F. headed a working man's Labor Party. He said "The Chinese Must Go." Journalists & politicians warned against mixed marriages & the leather Chinese. In 1882 Congress passed a 10-yr. Chinese Exclusion Act.

You see there was prejudice against the Oriental before the Japanese arrived here. In 1854, Commodore Perry opened Japan with his peaceful squadron of Warships whose guns were aimed at Japanese forts. From about 1850 to 1854 - no one could enter or leave Japan without the Emperor's permission. Japan had been closed to the world. It was not until 1884 that the Emperor allowed 5000 unskilled laborers to migrate to Hawaii after the sugar interests begged for labor for their fields. Some of the Japanese transhipped to the U.S. By ¹⁸⁹⁰~~1900~~, 2000 were here. Again Denis Kearney was agitating. He screamed "The Japs Must Go". Part of his animosity was due to the fact that Irish immigrants in the East were ^{not} treated much better than the coolies of the West. Who wants to be low man on the totem pole?

By 1925 - 25,000 Japanese were here. The mayor of S. F. said then: ^{quote} "The Japanese are not the stuff of which Am. citizens can be made. The Japanese & Chinese are not bona fide citizens. Their ways are different. Let them keep a respectful distance" ^{quote}

In 1901 the U.S. Industrial Commission ^{had} said that the Japanese were more service than the Chinese - but were tricky, unreliable, and dishonest. They even forbid the Chinese for jobs.

In 1902, when the Chinese Exclusion Act came up for renewal, there were rallies & demonstrations against the Chinese and Japanese. Lo and behold!

The Japanese counterdemonstrated. That was unheard of. That was a real threat. May

I interject here a statement by a sociologist:

He compares the Japanese to the Jews in their ^{not} adaptability, their cleverness, and their brilliance.
 saying Chinese are stupid - just more pleased.

In 1905, many groups formed leagues against the Japanese. The Chinese were excluded - but the Japanese not - There were so many groups that they had to form a coordinating Council.

From 1905 to 1924, the Calif. legislature was besieged with proposals against the Japanese. Many legislators were prejudiced but the

federal govt dictated. Why? Well, why did Perry open Japan in 1854? He had carried with him a letter from Pres. Fillmore telling of the gold strike & the money we had for trade.

Before Pearl Harbor ^{hostile} 3 actions of importance took place.

I
The Gentlemen's Agreement in 1908: No U.S. law against the Japanese - ^{Emperor promised} No immigrants could come - only picture brides. We promised the Emperor to stop our discrimination against them. This action came as a direct result of the S.F. School Board's attempt to segregate Oriental students. Through his consuls, the Emperor learned of the action & was furious. Pres. Teddy Roosevelt almost "blew a fuse". Why? Well, in 1894 we had signed a treaty with Japan making her the most favored nation & promising to give Japanese her the rights & protections of Am. citizens.

Action 2. In 1913, Calif. forbade aliens ineligible to become citizens the right to own land. The land Japanese did get was always marginal. Yes, they had land by railroads, oil refineries, and power plants - because

those businesses could not use that land for residences and they leased the land to the Japanese. It was not good land, but the Japanese knew intensive farming. They were the first to plant crops so that there would be fresh produce all year long.

Action 3: By 1924 Prejudice was rampant. So Congress passed the Japanese Exclusion Act. ^{People} ~~They~~ said here "Now the yellow peril is laid to rest" - but that action was a direct insult to Japan. They felt disgraced before the world.

At that time we allowed 100,000 Mexican ^{Indians} free entry to the U.S. yearly. ~~But we~~ ^{There} we ^{really} ~~so~~ concerned about racial purity - or were certain interests eager to have cheap ^{labor} ~~land~~ that would it own land or be aggressive?

The Japanese, for the most part, became rural residents. They could not compete with urban labor & its attitude. Tragically the Japanese did stoop labor - saved their money & bought land in their son's names. Again it was only marginal land open to them.

During the '30's the Orientals were literary & movie stereotypes of villains - sly & ruthless.

In the 30's came Japan's occupation of Manchuria, her invasion of China, her withdrawal from the League of Nations, her defiance of the Naval Arms Limitation Pact. (What nations truly lived up to those international agreements? They scrapped the old tools of war & built bigger & better ones. Then the U.S.S. Panay was bombed in a Chinese harbor by the Japanese - All these events made the U.S. more fearful of the Japanese.

You know what happened on Dec. 7, 1941, that fateful Sunday morning. The Japanese had plotted & carried out the plot so successfully that our leaders sought to keep the extent of the disaster from us. We were horrified, frightened & frustrated - We struck at the only available enemy - the Japanese in our midst.

Reinforcements flew: Japanese saboteurs dwelt in hovels near oil refineries & shipyards, Japanese fishermen had naval uniforms wrapped in oil skins in their bait boxes; Japanese house boys were intelligence ^{agents} ~~agents~~; the farmers were soldiers.

Dec. 8. All Japanese funds were frozen in our banks. -
 Checks written on Dec. 6 were not always honored. -
 Public utilities demanded cash or they would cut off
 gas, electricity & water - Stores wouldn't sell on credit, &
 milk companies wouldn't deliver milk

Dec. 10^u Atty. Gen. Biddle announced that
 as long as the aliens behaved themselves efforts
 would be made to protect them. It was only just
 & decent to do that - Besides we had citizens
 trapped in Japan our action might protect
 them.

Dec. 12. Japanese funds were unfrozen to
 the extent that a family could draw ^{to} 1.00 each month
Jan 2: Manila fell

Jan 3. Signs in stores - "No Japs allowed"
 Rowdies invaded the Japanese Produce Markets
 Then the state decided aliens couldn't collect the
 sales tax - so the produce markets closed

German & Italian aliens could ^{still} go out in their
 fishing boats - but Japanese-Americans ^{citizens} were
 forbidden. The Japanese around Terminal Island
 were especially suspect. Why were the Japanese there?
 Large fish cannery on Terminal Island - Cannery workers
 had to be close so they could go to work when fishing ships came in.

Crystal City, Texas
or
Ht. Lincoln, N. Dak.

11

arrested & interned. Ex. Safeway Official in Oakland
supposedly Swedish - but a German agent -

If a Japanese had a camera, he was suspect -
How little the excited propagandists knew about real
espionage. Japanese spies had the pictures ^{& information} they
wanted long before Pearl Harbor & were back in Japan
before Dec. 7. But rumors flew - A raid on
a Japanese farm: water pipes for irrigation = material
for guns; clothes lines were airdrops; insecticides =
poison for Caucasians.

Feb. 3. Both Lt. Genl Biddle & Secy of War
Stimson stated that there was absolutely no
evidence of spying by enemy aliens. There
was off coast signalling - but who did it?

Prior to Pearl Harbor 2 native born whites -
Farnsworth & Thompson were convicted of espionage
for Japan. ^{after Pearl Harbor} Williams & Ryder were convicted of
being unregistered Japanese ^{agents} as well
Reed & Heizer Wright who had been on the
editorial staff of the New York Daily News. J. H.
Synth & Ralph Townsend - leader of the American
First Movement were also unregistered agents of Japan.

An L.A. policeman spied on the Japanese -
Americans for the L.A. Japanese Consul.

In June, 1943, the Office of War Information learned
that Nazi Agents signalled the Jap. at Pearl Harbor

Real betrayal came from the East, not the Orientals.

Japanese-Americans here were further debased - No Japanese could be an air warden Cities & Counties discharged them from Civil Service jobs.

Feb. 15 Singapore fell

Hostility was now open hatred. A curfew had been placed on the Japanese. The Chinese wore large badges which stated "I am Chinese". However, the Chinese did lend Japanese friends those badges.

Some people wanted a Constitutional Amendment to the citizenship of Japanese-Americans could be reclassified & thus put the Japanese in the category of prisoners & how to be used as the Army saw fit.

On Feb. 19 President Roosevelt issued the famous 9066 Executive Order:

It gave the Army authority to establish military zones anywhere in the U.S. from which any persons, citizens or aliens could be evacuated & excluded. Those affected were Americans of Japanese ancestry - but the order did not specify ethnic origin & openly violated the Fifth Amendment.

The ^{next} order gave the Army authority to set up camps. Genl De Witt was put in charge.

Feb. 24. Japanese submarines shelled oil wells ~~at~~ ^{near} Santa Barbara.

Feb. 25. Newspapers demanded immediate evacuation. Congressmen, legislators & Even Earl Warren were prejudiced. Genl De Witt felt somewhat like early Army Indian fighters - the only good ones were the dead ones. However, J. Edgar Hoover of the F.B.I. was strongly opposed to evacuation - but his voice was lost in tempest of fear & hatred.

March 18 - Dillon Meyer was appointed head of the War Relocation Authority.

Meanwhile the Japanese here were in shock -
They turned everything that related to Japan
They lived in terror of what would happen
to them.

March 25. All movement of Japanese was stopped to prepare for orderly Army evacuation. Manzanar, Calif. & Poston, Arizona, had bldgs that could be used - so they were ready first.

The Japanese had annual crops valued at \$40,000,000 in the 1942 dollars. They owned

less than 4% of the farmland but worked 40% of the land either ^{under leases or as} ~~as~~ ~~leasees~~ or tenants. They grew 75% of the celery, 80% of the string beans, and 95% of the strawberries. George Shima, an immigrant had developed a seed potato that made him "potato King of Calif." ^{American farmers profited - tubefake potatoes} Arrington - half deserted, dusty & sandy was made to bloom by the Japanese. The farmers stood to lose millions.

People waited until the last few days before buying from the Japanese who were forced to give away their possessions or sell them for a song - so to speak - with oral promises to pay. Later an Alien Property Custodian was established - but he & his staff could do little.

On April 1 - the first evacuation - 5000 taken to Santa Anita Race tracks & installed in newly white washed horse stalls. The chart shows the other assembly centers. In Puyallup, Wash the assembly center had one restroom for each 100 people.

The Army engineers did a magnificent job as they had the assembly centers ready in 28 days. In 137 days the relocation

Camps were ready. By June 8 all Japanese were out of Military zones I & II. It was an orderly evacuation. The bewildered Japanese helped & cooperated. I wonder how well the Army would have done with 110,000 Caucasians - & Riot every 15 minutes?

Western governments did not want them ^{except Ralph Carr, Colo.} The Governor of Kansas flatly refused to have them.

Of course the camps were established on federal lands & in areas ^{truly} God-forsaken. On the map you can see: Manzanar & Tule Lake, Calif.; Poston & Gila River, Arizona; Topaz, Utah; Minidoka, Idaho; Granada, Colorado; Heart Mountain, Wyoming; Jerome and Rohwer, Arkansas. All areas had blistering summers & freezing winters.

~~The~~ ^{in 1942} the U.S. government interned some 117,000 of its residents - 2/3 of them were natural-born citizens. They were not given definite advance notices so packing was hurriedly done - a suitcase apiece & what they could carry. The Federal Reserve Bank of S.F. estimated in 1942 that their property was worth at least 400 million dollars. Years later

Congress repaid property claims to the tune of 38 million + 14 thousand 140 dollars - about 10% of the value. How can we estimate what they lost in wages, income, & interest during the internment?

In the camps, army barracks made of rough lumber & covered with tar paper were their homes. The inside was left unfurnished but was furnished with a pot-bellied stove, army cots & a blanket for each cot plus one light dangling from the ceiling - rooms about 12' x 24'. There were showers & restrooms in each block as well as a mess hall. There were water faucets outside. The streets were beaten paths - dusty in summer - seas of mud in the winter.

The effect on the Japanese? Absolutely demoralizing. ^{There are} ~~Always~~ ^{three} 3 ~~groups~~ ^{types of} reactions to shock:

1. The eager ones want to prove loyalty or bravery
2. The submissive apathetic ones with no initiative
3. The ones whose anger is almost instant. Always a chip on the shoulder.

Yet the 3 groups agreed on a few facts:

1. Evacuations was unnecessary - always been low-abiding
2. They were crushed economically 30 to 40 yrs of labor gone
3. They had been objects of scorn & ridicule & couldn't protect themselves
4. The war for democracy was already tarnished by internment

There were some 4000 Jap. Americans in the Armed Services before Dec. 7, 1941. Most were in Europe, but some served as interpreters in the Pacific. Odd, isn't it that the Army accepted them before Pearl Harbor & then interned their brothers & sisters?

The Groups: Issei, Nisei, Kibei, Sansei

Well, after this long discussion - how did I get into the W. R. A. at Pulehake?

~~That~~ Executive Order 9066 did not say which nationality could be interned. It just gave the Army the right to imprison citizens. It was an order that was not revoked until Nov., 1973. I feel that the pictorial display of internment in Washington, D.C., in various state capitols including Sacramento & various college Fresno State U., plus the programs given, and the film "Built by Race" induced Congress to ^{repeal} ~~revoke~~ the order.

We were in the Bay Area in San Leandro - husband in administration in schools - many Air Drills & alerts - First alert - little Jap. girl

It made us think seriously. That little girl didn't
feel Japanese at all

My husband and I were Niseis - ^{Norwegian} Irish & English

Margy was Sansai. What if we were interviewed?

Was our citizenship safe? Kidding - 117 000 Norwegian
might be stoic & phlegmatic - by 117 000 Irishmen
behind barbed wire fences? Heaven help the Army

When call came for teachers at Tule Lake - we
responded - ^{civil service} Exams - FBI investigations - finally
confirmation. Husband - principal of elementary
schools - then of the H.S. then ^{late in 1944} assist project director

He left in June. We had to wait for a room
available in August -

Our excitement when we left Oakland for
Klamath Falls - the stark of the camp -
the rows & rows & rows of black barracks
in the desolate, treeless scene - ^{dusty,} - red dirt &
hot ^{surrounded} ~~surrounding~~ by black prairie & forbidding
rocks - but there was Mt. Shasta in the
distance

Tule Lake area has a amazingly fertile soil
a lake bed from which water had disappeared
centuries before. Top soil 40 ft deep -
The project farm produced prodigious crops

immense cabbages and turnips large enough for jack-o'-lanterns for Halloween.

We lived in 1 room until Dec. ate in the messhall ^{by chaps} good food - One pie - Cream with green garden peas -

~~Around~~ 500 Caucasians employees: teachers, finance officers, typists, bookkeepers, warehouse heads, ag experts, woodshop men internal security staff, sociologists, journalists, psychiatrist, and anthropologist plus the Army in its ^{separate} quarters.

Dillon Meyer felt the Camp should be organized on democratic principles. There were representatives ^{from each block} which formed a Council to act as governing body for the Japanese. There were Japanese foremen & policemen. Then a Cooperative was formed so that canlens could be set up.

School opened Sept 14 in a row of tarpaper barracks. Each room had benches for the pupils - a crude desk for the teacher, a foot-bellied stove for heat, a blackboard & erasers - but no chalk & no books. ^{later 3 diff. texts for each class}

Teachers from all over - Wash, Oregon, ^{Calif}, Idaho, Utah & missionaries from China, Japan

the Philippines, Turkey & Syria. People had come in protest - The coast was crying for teachers - we were considered desolated. In 1943 many left for outside positions

Everyone had to have a badge to get into camp.

When the permanent school was built, we had to wear a badge with a picture in order to pass the sentry & get into school.

First day - 60 brown faces looking at me eagerly & politely & that list of impossible looking names. I asked for help & listened very, very carefully to the pronunciation. I can still see that foreboding room.

I thought would list & Eng in a core class

3 cores a day - 60 to 65 in a class - Work from 8 to 5:00. Allowed to move w/ original class. ^{U.S. Hist & Eng} ^{Sociology} ^{W. Geog.}
^{Const & Eng}

N.S. program typical of the outside program
band cooking art speech math typing
orchestra sewing journalism Science ^{Eng} Hist Woodshop

1500 in elementary - 2400 in N.S. - Salute to flag everyday

Memorable incident: Martha from Hood River

^{Born here}
Had Kibei - educated in Japan. After the

1924 Exclusion Law parents couldn't go back to

Japan - usually sent a son to stay with grand-

parents - Returned by Japan before Pearl Harbor
language difficulty - strangers to their families

Stayed after 5 P.M. to help them. ^{Soon} ~~Soon~~ had a little ^{group} class of Kibei ^{from other classes} with varying degrees of fluency in Eng. Explained ^{analogous} vowels - saying we had a e i o u sometimes y & w but 26 sounds whereas Japanese vowels are pure. One ~~boy~~ ^{boy} mystified - pointed to his stomach. Fortunately one Kibei knew enough English to tell him I had said vowels not bowels.

Later some boy said. "Why for people laugh at me ^{in mess hall} when I say: Please pass the lice."

Other incidents: Margery spitting image to your father: Answer to a question: "I haven't a slice of an idea" - They just could add ess to plurals at first.

Margery had to go to the high school in the village of Tule Lake - M.R.A. head said - No Caucasian pupils in Camp schools. She was a senior at that time.

Attitude of village of Tule Lake hostile - sign on gas pump - "No gas for Jap lovers!"

Many activities for adults:

labor on the farm
~~farm labor~~

Beer by shop

Sewing Shop

Wood Shop

Flower Making

Flower Arranging

Art classes

Tea Ceremony

Dance Class

^{Japanese} Drama

Embroidering

Jewelry Making

Wood Carving

Sports →

Music

Groups

Band

Orchestra

Baseball Team
always
beat

Klamath Falls Team

↓
Japanese always
bright more
buds than
Klamath
tells people

fell wind that blows no good - Little Issei women had
for the first time in their lives - leisure for personal pursuits
They could not do farm work. (22)

There was ^{also} work in camp mess halls, warehouses, wood
shop, the administration, the 200 bed hospital
headed by Fresno's Dr. Hashiba - Then there was
janitorial work for restrooms in camp & administration.
Women could be hired to clean rooms & apts.

Pay set: \$12 a month farm labor - unskilled
\$16 " " semi-skilled
\$19 " " skilled - Dr. Hashiba - Dentists etc.

We were allowed to have teacher aides in Nov. 1942
\$16 a month
Slight incident in late 1942 - complaints about
food in camp. Car accident discovery of ^{white} men engaged
in black market. After that no complaints

Fears in Camp:

Fear about livelihood after war, fear of unfavorable
treatment after war, fear of shortages in food or clothing
or fuel, fear of violence, fear of disease - fear
about education of children - fear of further relocation

Tensions in camp - hot heads instigators
Nisei against Issei - Prejudice against people
from Hokkaido - the Itos or Hairy Barbarians
^{Hawkeyes}

We became purchasers of ^{Hawkeyes} supplies for them when
we went to Klamath Falls. Always rewarded with presents
~~My husband & I entertained my pupils in a apt~~

On Jan 28, 1943, Roosevelt decided to form
a Nisei Combat Team on a volunteer basis. Beginning of
442nd Battalion, our most decorated unit - had
25,000 Nisei in it. Recruiting Teams in each camp - Ours *

~~On~~ In February & March all Japanese over 17
were registered. School closed & teachers had to register
them. We weren't properly instructed. We thought we were
getting information to help in relocating the inmates
But there was Question 28. "Will you swear un-
qualified allegiance to the U.S. & faithfully defend
it & forswear allegiance to the Japanese"

emperor or any other foreign govt, power, or organization?"
 Girls were asked if they would join the Army Nurse Corps
 or Maacs plus 28 without the clause for the Armed Forces.
Aliens were asked if they would abide by the laws of the
U.S. & take no action against the war effort.

The dilemma: The Japanese knew that many people on
 the West Coast wanted to deport all the Japanese. If they
 said yes would the Emperor accept them. They'd be ⁽²³⁾
people without a country.

There were many incidents of violence. Hatreds said,
 "If you are an American citizen, let's see you walk out of
 Camp. ^{Leaders beaten} Arrests were made - men taken to ~~the~~ ^{Ft. Leavenworth, K.A.}

Parents pressured - threatened suicide if sons said yes

I'm afraid I registered several who said no, but
 it sounded like yes to me

After registration - returns were tallied. Tule
 Lake was made the Segregation Center. All who said no
 to 28 were to ~~go~~ ^{be} there & Loyal Tuleans were to go
 to other camps. Exchange of 9,000

Then in Oct, 1943, we had the Incident which
 wiped war news off the front pages for a few days. A
 farm worker was shot by a soldier right at the
main gate 21 ~~people~~ ^{people were injured} Then we really had incidents -
 Japanese music played constantly. The Army feared
 Japan would kill some of our citizens interned there.

There was a strike - no school. ~~Order~~ ^{Order} Demonstration
 all camp members marched up to Administration Bldg.
 No violence - they merely asked for rights & protection
 as prisoners of war. I was home -

A million dollar electrified fence built - Army
 in control until Jan 14. School opened again in
 Feb. - new school - lots of new faces - but a great
 many old ones. Loyal people wouldn't move.

April 12, 1945 - Roosevelt died - fear again
 3 days of mourning - no school

August - V. G. Day - Science & Fire Alarm - school
children - Housed Nisei soldiers in camp -
Fear of retaliation (24)

Then entrapment for the Gripsholm. Heart
aches for each train load. Children had no choice
Letters → School closed Feb. 1946 { Teachers had helped }
{ promote relocation } *

Pupils I still hear from directly or indirectly

1. Yuzuru Takeshita - Kibei - ^{Ph.D.} U. of Mich - Sociology
2. Albert Tsugawa - Hawaii - Ph.D. Associate prof. at Penn State - Philosophy
3. Yukio Kumasaka - M. A. Seattle
4. Hisashi Kumasaka - M. A. Wash. ^{Harvard graduate}
5. Fuji Wada - Buddhist priest L. A.
6. Roy Ishibashi - Kibei - Japan + U.S. Army
7. Yukio Uyeno - Pediatrician - Sacto
8. Harry Kajahara - U.S. Naval Research - Pt Hueneme
9. Richard Taraka - Ph.D. Electrical Engineering
Stanford Tunnel
Computer Company - Anaheim
Pres. of Am Federation of Information Processing
U.S. delegate to International
Worked for U.N.
Pres. of Internatl Federation of Information
Processing - 3 countries

No teaching experience was so satisfying

Carey McWilliam's book Prejudice helped break
Japanese back to Calif.

I feel wind that blows us good - { Nisei can be citizens
accepted. } Japanese now
accepted. Scars of internment remain - but
they hide them well. ~~Nisei can be citizens now~~
how well they hide them!

A Salute to Mrs. Gunderson

Mrs. Margaret Gunderson (89) taught high school in a concentration camp for Japanese Americans in a remote location in California during World War II. A 50th Anniversary Reunion of those who were interned was held in Sacramento at the end of May. 1,300 of those who were involved, mostly Niseis, assembled from all over the U.S. and overseas, including Japan.

Mrs. Gunderson was also invited as a special guest and had an emotional reunion with her former students.

The highlight of the event was the "Sayonara Party." Speeches by Congressman Robert Matsui and Bob Bratt, former redress administrator, representing the government, followed. The last guest speaker was Professor Yuzuru Takeshita (a sociologist) of the University of Michigan. "Mrs. Gunderson gave me courage and lighted a flame in me. She consoled us warmly like a mother and gave us strong encouragement. Through her class in American history,

she firmly planted in us America's conscience and true spirit." The Issei's shock was great as they went off to camp, following the President's Executive Order, which directed that "each person take with him only what he can carry in his two hands." After all, they had lost at once their positions and livelihood they had built up over the years with much hardship. The Nisei children who were brought up as American citizens were beset with anger, confusion, and frustration as they were treated as enemy aliens by being shipped off to concentration camps surrounded by barbed-wire fences and guarded by armed soldiers. Professor Takeshita concluded: "We owe all that we are today to Mrs. Gunderson."

Mrs. Gunderson, helped by her former student, stood on the podium and surprised everyone by starting with the statement: "I am a Nisei." She related that her parents were immigrants from Scotland. "To violate the Constitutionally guaranteed rights of

one person is to violate not only that person but all Americans---no, all of us in this world. We have fought in the past to protect the rights of people in defense of our democracy. We must continue today to fight for the rights of all people." Mrs. Gunderson's passion-filled words to the Nisei students during World War II were: "The internment of Japanese American citizens was clearly a violation of our Constitution. To right the wrong committed by our Federal Government is a duty and responsibility we as citizens must all bear!" Her speech this night was as full of fiery passion as her words of 50 years ago.

What passion and fighting spirit gushing out from this small and thin elderly woman! The banquet hall that was hushed while she spoke broke out in thunderous applause---to salute Mrs. Gunderson!

(Reported by Teresa Tamura of San Jose, a legal consultant)

MARGARET GUNDERSON

Memorial Services will be held at two o'clock tomorrow afternoon at Lodi Funeral Home on Fairmont Avenue in Lodi for Margaret Crosby Gunderson, born in a sod hut in Gronna, North Dakota in 1903.

The youngest child of John Dunn Crosby and Elizabeth Barton Crosby, she died of natural causes Friday, June 27, at a local convalescent hospital, seven days after her 94th birthday.

A teacher for over 40 years in North Dakota and California, she received her AA from Fargo Agricultural and Commerce College, received her teaching credential at age 18 and began her remarkable career of influencing young people. She met her future husband, Martin Peter Gunderson, in Golden Valley, North Dakota, where he was the Superintendent of Schools, and they were married on January 16, 1924. Their only child, Margery Ann, was born August 21, 1925, in Valley City.

In order to complete four-year college degrees, as mandated suddenly by the state, they alternated teaching and years of college for several years and Margaret graduated with High Honors from Valley City Normal School (now Valley City State Teachers College) in 1928. Martin graduated in 1929.

From 1929 to 1937 they served, he as Superintendent, she as a high school teacher, in Gackle, North Dakota. In 1937 they moved to San Leandro, California, where Martin was Assistant Superintendent of the elementary schools and Margaret substituted in the Oakland School District, teaching English and History. She also served as president of the San Leandro High School Parent Teachers Association.

With the outbreak of World War II, and sensing the great injustice of the incarceration of Japanese-American citizens in concentration camps, they applied for position with the War Relocation Authority. They were assigned to Tule Lake Relocation Center where Martin was in charge of creating a school system and Margaret taught history, English and speech from 1942 through April of 1946.

Since further government assignments were then frozen, they accepted their greatest challenge. They went to West Side School District in Fresno County, the largest area rural school district in California, and the most incredible school population situation. Nearly all the children were migrant farm workers, along with their parents. The Gundersons began with a school of three ramshackle classrooms and struggled through the development of a 23-room modern campus, the model for migrant education in the western states. Martin served as Superintendent until his death in 1958. Margaret continued on as teacher and Vice Principal until her retirement in 1965, when she moved into Fresno and became the teacher for the girls in County Juvenile Hall for four years.

Mrs. Gunderson enjoyed a lengthy tour of Europe, a gift from the parents of West Side School District at Five Points, giving book reviews for the Women's Society of the Methodist Church and other women's groups, and at the age of 67 began attending art classes. She progressed from découpage to oils. Many of her pieces were sold at Fresno area church bazaars and at Fresno State fund raisers. She continued art work until her eye sight failed her.

She received a Masters Degree from Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo in 1962. She was a member of Gamma Delta Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma in Fresno, the California Retired Teachers Association, and was an ardent Democrat.

Her special love was encouraging students who needed help. For her the school day ended when her help was no longer needed. For her Japanese students, the message was that the government made a mistake with relocation, but the Constitution was still right, it was their country, and they were still Americans. The many professors, doctors, scientists, and other professionals who took courage from her attest to the effectiveness of her teaching. They mourn her passing.

She was preceded in death by her husband Martin in 1958, sister Mary Andert in 1969, half-sister Dee Bennett in 1984, her father John in 1945, and her mother Elizabeth in 1906.

Margaret, better known to all as Nana, is survived by her daughter Margery G. Field and son-in-law Wayne L. Field of Lodi; grandson David John Martin Field, his wife Sharon and their daughter Amy of Elverta; and granddaughter Deborah Margaret Dawang, her husband Val and their daughter Stacy of Folsom. Also surviving are nephews Warren and Robert Andert and Raymond Bechtel, and nieces Billie Ulland, Sally Melberg and Nancy McCorkle, all of Minnesota.

A special friend who remembers Margaret with great affection is retired professor Yuzuru Takeshita of the University of Michigan, who wrote about her in an article published in "Readers Digest" several years ago and has visited with her several times in recent years. He will be present at the memorial and wishes to speak about his dear friend and teacher.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Florin Japanese American Citizens League Scholarship Fund, 890 Sunwind Way, Sacramento, CA 95831, the First United Methodist Church in Lodi, or the charity of your choice.

Doctor Norman Mowery of the First United Methodist Church will conduct the services.

There will be no visitation. Private inurnment will be later in the week.

Tule Lake Teacher Was an Inspiration to Students

Margaret Gunderson, 94, a former teacher at WW II Tule Lake Concentration Camp passed away of natural causes June 27, 1997 in a Lodi, CA Nursing Home.

A lengthy, detailed obituary appeared in the local Lodi News Sentinel, June 30 announcing Gunderson's Memorial Service the next day July 1 at 2:00 PM. Over half of about thirty who attended at the Lodi Funeral Home were Asian Americans to pay tribute to her.

A reception followed at Lodi First United Methodist Church. There was no visitation. Private inurnment was held July 3 at Lodi Memorial Cemetery.

Unsung heroes such as Gunderson and other Non-Nikkei who voluntarily came to one of the ten relocation camps to teach and provide administrative services were treated like Internees after the camps were closed. It was not easy for them as with the Internees to find places to live and locate suitable jobs.

About a month before her death, Kinya Noguchi and I went to the Lodi Nursing Home to conduct a Oral History interview for the Florin JACL-CSUS Library Japanese

American Archival Collection. Noguchi is a former student of Mrs. Gunderson and retired Sacramento County sheriff.

Though she was in bed during the entire interview, she seemed relatively alert and responded well to our questions at her age of almost 94.

Another former student was Prof. Emeritus Yuzuru John Takeshita of University of Michigan, School of Public Health. A final tribute by him FAXed to us was read at the Memorial Service by son-in-law Wayne Field.

"Margaret" he said, "You gave me hope in the midst of despair during World War II when we were confined behind barbed wire fences, and you have been been a constant source of inspiration for me throughout my life as I have tried to to do what is right as you did when you chose to protest the governments's action to intern us by taking a teaching job at Tule Lake, where I happened upon you as one of your many students"

Also a special Japanese "wake" poem composed by Takeshita was read by Joanne Iritani, Florin JACL President.

Takeshita, a young Kibei was rather confused and bewildered as were many others when confined at Tule Lake, where there was much turmoil. A Reader's Digest article (March, 1989) "On Wings of Forgiveness" explains how this teacher Margaret Gunderson helped him to understand that "democracy is a difficult journey, not a destination already reached".

Former students may send letters/comments/tributes to Florin JACL, 890 Sunwind Way, Sacramento, CA 95831 for inclusion in her Oral History book which will include daughter Margery Field and Takeshita and be a part of the CSUS Library Archival Collection.

Margaret Crosby Gunderson was born in a sod hut in Gronna, North Dakota, received the AA Degree from Fargo Agricultural and Commercial College and the teaching credential from Valley State Teachers College. She married Martin Gunderson and their only child Margery was born August 21, 1925 in Valley City.

They moved to California where he was Asst. Supt. of a Hayward elementary school and she was a teacher in the Oakland School district. With the outbreak of WW II,

seeing the great injustice of incarceration of Japanese American citizens in concentration camps, they applied to War Relocation Authority and were assigned to Tule Lake, 1942-46, a remote, desolate dry lake bed near the Calif.-Oregon border. Martin was Assistant Project Director and Margaret was a teacher of English, history and speech.

After Tule Lake was closed, they accepted their greatest challenge in the Five-Points, largely Hispanic migrant area west of Fresno. They struggled to develop a 25-room modern campus, a model of migrant education for the western states. Martin served as superintendent until his death in 1958. Margaret served as vice-principal and teacher until her retirement in 1965.

Memorial contributions may be sent to either Florin JACL Scholarship Fund, 890 Sunwind Way, Sacramento, CA 95831; First United Methodist Church, 200 W Oak St., Lodi, CA 95240 or a charity of your choice.

By FRANK IRITANI

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

MARGERY GUNDERSON FIELD

MARGERY GUNDERSON FIELD was born in Valley City, North Dakota August 21, 1925 of Martin P. and Margaret Crosby Gunderson. She married Wayne L. Field July 7, 1951 in Stockton, California and both are retired public school teachers. They have two children: David John Martin Field of Elverta, California and Deborah Margaret Field Dawang of Folsom, California.

Margery's 1st through 6th grade education was in Gackle, North Dakota. She attended 7th through 11th grades in San Leandro and finished at Tule Lake High School as her parents were educators at Tri-State High School of the Tule Lake Internment Center.

The Fields, as well as the Gundersons, were more than just teachers. Along with the basic subjects, they taught and shared their beliefs of the ideals of democracy, evils of hate and discrimination, and Christian values of decency and dignity of people--especially minorities.

Following are excerpts from Margery's Tule Lake High School English Class essay, "With Liberty and Justice for All":

"The Japanese American Boy Scouts recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the words 'with liberty and Justice for all' hit me. How inappropriate these words are! I could see barb-wire fences stretching as far as the eye could see. This surely was not a symbol of liberty. What future is there for them?"

"Many never received the absentee voter ballots they requested. Many never received more than a down payment for the property they sold. They had to sell their property at drastic reduction. These mistreatments have had a narrowing effect upon their minds."

"Anyone who hates never hates a single person or race but always several persons or races. Soon, he hates everyone, including himself. There can be no justice for all when the world is filled with hatred. There can be no hope of lasting world peace unless there is brotherly love instilled in the heart of every individual."

[Begin Tape 1, Side 1

NOGUCHI: We are at the home of Wayne Field and Margery Field and the address is
2043 Gateway Circle and the date is June 14, 1997.

FIELD: Flag Day.

IRITANI: Flag Day, right. [CHUCKLES]

NOGUCHI: And I will be here to interview Margery Gunderson Field and to start with
where were you born and your parents' names.

FIELD: I was born in Valley City, North Dakota. You want the year and the date?

NOGUCHI: Yes.

FIELD: August 21, 1925. It was 72 hours labor for my mother.

NOGUCHI: 72 hours.

IRITANI: Oh, my! [CHUCKLES]

NOGUCHI: They didn't expect either one of us to live.

IRITANI: Yeah, it's a . . .

NOGUCHI: Did you have any other brothers or sisters? You are the only child.

FIELD: Yes. I don't like to be an only child.

[CHUCKLES]

NOGUCHI: Do you recall some of the things that you had as an experience as to your growing up time that you can recall?

FIELD: Well, from Valley City we went to Golden Valley, North Dakota and that's where my folks had met to marry. And they taught. My mother went back to teach shortly after I was born. My dad [Martin P. Gunderson] was superintendent. And I had a lot of cousins there. A lady by the name of Maggie Aipperspach took care of me. We lived there until they made it a rule in North Dakota that all teachers had to have four years of college. So then my mother taught, my dad went back to school and vice versa, and I lived with my Aunt Mary [Mary Crosby Andert] who lived in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, and I had a lot of cousins there.

NOGUCHI: How long did you stay there?

FIELD: My dad graduated in 1929 and so I imagine for a couple of years. Then we moved to a little town called Gackle and that was a very lonesome period of time because there were no children around. The only woman I knew was a Finnish lady. She spoke only Finnish.

NOGUCHI: So there was a kind of language barrier there?

FIELD: I would sit on her steps. She sat on her porch and rocked back and forth and smoked her pipe and she would give me little pieces of Finnish bread--flatbread.

NOGUCHI: Oh, that was quite a security .

FIELD: And there was no kindergarten. And when I went to school I sat during the first grade and watched the kids. They thought I knew how to read because they read me all these stories from the book. Boy, I had a memory like that! And I could repeat it . . .

IRITANI: That was good. Oh, good.

FIELD: Would you like some orange juice?

IRITANI: Oh, no thank you, we just had breakfast.

NOGUCHI: We just had breakfast.

FIELD: Oh, we wanted to offer you something.

IRITANI: Well, maybe we need to take a break a little later. [CHUCKLES]

NOGUCHI: Yes, we will, thank you.

IRITANI: OK.

FIELD: At any rate, my dad had to--was superintendent and he had told me if ever I wound up in his office I'd get spanked--no questions asked.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: The teacher would say, "Well, Margery Ann, if you don't get busy, we are going to have to send you to your father--to Mr. Gunderson. And whatever I was doing, I got busy. Not very well. But she didn't teach phonics. It was the whole word method. And when a hired girl had small

pox, we moved in with a doctor and his family. The doctor's wife had taught primary grades. She took me and taught me phonics.

NOGUCHI: How large was this school? We are talking about a country school?

FIELD: It was a little city--I don't know--there weren't more than 32 in high school.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: Thirty in my class were first and second combined--maybe 200.

NOGUCHI: 200.

FIELD: And then there was first and second, third and fourth, about 36 in sixth. I hated my sixth grade and fifth grade teacher. She didn't like me either. And then a combined seventh and eighth, and then my folks taught ninth and twelfth. My mother had all world history and English and my dad taught math and physics and chemistry and typing. And they had to give a State exam every year. But by the time they left, they didn't have to give a State exam because the school's scores had been so high.

NOGUCHI: Do you recall the students? Were they all white children or were they mixed?

FIELD: They all spoke another language. When they didn't want me to know, they spoke German to each other. Or they spoke Finnish. It was a large German and Finnish community.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

FIELD: I heard so much German, I didn't care if I ever heard it again--one language I did not study.

NOGUCHI: Do you recall any incidents that you had with the children aside from not speaking to you in English? [CHUCKLES]

FIELD: I don't think I made friends that easily. My mother said, "Well, they are jealous of you because you are the daughter of the superintendent of schools." I don't think it was that. I just think it was my lack of ability to socialize well.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: I still don't socialize that well.

NOGUCHI: At what point in your life do you recall where your parents became aware of how things were going on in the United States?

FIELD: My mother taught world history. She knew in 1933 there was going to be a war. She was an avid Democrat. [She] still is and I understand that many Japanese are Republicans and I can understand why after I've read all about the evacuation. I never read such bitter racist propaganda in all my life, and that General [John L.] DeWitt!

NOGUCHI: Yes

FIELD: Neither of my parents really cared for him and I think he was--what's the word? Paranoid.

NOGUCHI: Well, I think the politicians at that time--so many of them had the same attitude anyway and there was a lot of political pressure and I think--this might have been personal but there was a lot that was political.

FIELD: This is the one to read by John Hersey and he, Yuzuru [Professor Emeritus Yuzuru Takeshita], faxed it and sent it to my mother. But in here it tells how they were able to get away with what they did. And then it tells about--in some cases, they had four days to get rid of their possessions.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

FIELD: Some woman sold their 37-room hotel for \$350. No, I'm not good on math. Someone had just had his car--his truck replaced, had four new tires, and I think a distributor, and sold that for \$25. Then he goes on and tells about one instance of sabotage. And this is strange because a man asked for two or three days to get his strawberry crop in and they said, "No." He got out and he tilled it under. The next day the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] arrested him, put him in jail, accused him of sabotage, and I don't know how long he was in jail but they could throw people in jail for days for absolutely no reason.

IRITANI: Excuse me, can I just interrupt. I want to just check and see if this recorder is OK. All right, now go ahead. I'm sorry . . .

FIELD: Did you ask me something about Yuzuru?

IRITANI: No, I don't think so.

FIELD: The word I wanted on General DeWitt is "paranoid."

NOGUCHI: Uh huh. Yes.

IRITANI: Yes.

NOGUCHI: And being the Commander--the Commandant of the Sixth Army.

FIELD: Well, that will tell you how he got in charge because. . . . And it also tells that the Justice Department didn't go along with this. I think it was [Attorney General Francis] Biddle of the Justice Department. Until a Congressman came and threatened to take this whole thing and throw it on the floors of Congress.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: I don't know. He was . . .and just about most of those . . .

NOGUCHI: Did you give some of those so Margery can fill them out?

IRITANI: Yes, yes, she knows . . .

NOGUCHI: So getting back to the interview of you, Margery, so you didn't experience any incidents that you can recall that growing up--student at--was that in North Dakota?

FIELD: I wasn't German.

NOGUCHI: Huh?

FIELD: I wasn't German.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

FIELD: And if you weren't German--oh, and you weren't Baptist.

NOGUCHI: Oh. Oh, I see.

FIELD: My mother had a couple of students who got up and said, "You're very nice but you're going to go to Hell because you're not a Baptist." Those two students went to UCLA [University of California, Los Angeles] and came back later and apologized.

NOGUCHI: Oh, oh. Isn't that interesting.

FIELD: But they always called my dad "Professor."

NOGUCHI: Oh.

FIELD: So they had respect for education. And I got along with the Finnish people because they were Scandinavians and I was part Norwegian.

NOGUCHI: So over the years then--that's going through grammar school, then into high school . . .

FIELD: I went to San Leandro. We moved out here. My dad had been here at the University of California. My mother taught. And she and I went to North Dakota.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

FIELD: That's in 1937 when we got here and I went to San Leandro Junior High School and Senior High School from the seventh grade through the eleventh.

NOGUCHI: And do you recall how you felt at that time and did you observe anything while you were going to high school as to how the people--the students were reacting to the Japanese students?

FIELD: They were all popular.

NOGUCHI: Oh, they were all popular at San Leandro.

FIELD: I mean, if they ran for student body office, they won.

NOGUCHI: But you didn't observe any racial remarks or any attitudes or feelings . . .

FIELD: There was one boy in my class--his name was Lincoln Yamaguchi. And I think in twelfth--when he was a senior in high school, he and his dad were picked up. This one friend said he was near some railroad tracks or something. Everything I've read, they were picked up--no writ of habeas corpus--no civil rights.

NOGUCHI: Yes, for sure. Then do you recall anything else that you can tell us about on this tape about what you observed or heard of other students reacting to the Japanese students?

FIELD: Well, I know that the day after Pearl Harbor, my dad was Assistant Superintendent of Schools of elementary schools. He rode the school

FIELD: busses because he was afraid of reactions. He said at the first stop a little Nisei boy got on and he announced to the bus, "Do you know what those GD Japs did? They bombed Pearl Harbor." There were no incidents. That day we had an air raid warning. I remember going to sugar rationing board. I worked on the board--seeing all those Japanese going home from school--feeling sorry for them.

I just wondered what kind of life they were going into, and I didn't realize that I would be part of that life. And then my parents went up there [Tule Lake] because my mother said, "I am Nisei." They were both children of immigrants. And they knew what it was like to be discriminated against. My dad particularly, for being Norwegian. He speaks Norwegian.

My dad went up to Tule Lake around the 16th of July, 1942. My mother and I went up about the 28th of August. We went up by train. We took the train to Sacramento, and then we transferred and went up to Klamath Falls. And I said to my mother, "I certainly wish I could have graduated from Tule Lake High School--I mean from San Leandro High School." My mother said, "Margery" or Margery Ann, "this is the first time the United States Government has ever incarcerated its own citizens because they were at war with another country or with those people's

ancestors. Now suppose the United States went to war with Norway.

You'd be put in one of those concentration camps as soon as possible."

Now, my mother was not Norwegian. She knew I was proud of that. And she knew that would hit a point with me. And it did.

NOGUCHI: So when your father was. . . . Was it a voluntary thing that he wanted to be part of the War Relocation Authority [WRA]? Did he get hired on as a . . .

FIELD: Yes, through the University of California.

NOGUCHI: Through the University of California as the Superintendent?

FIELD: He was in charge of the elementary schools.

NOGUCHI: He was in charge of the elementary schools.

FIELD: Then, I think. . . . I've been going through a diary I kept which is very superficial. I mean I said, "Camp is nice." Well, it was nice for Caucasians. It was not nice for people who had to live there in those shacks with the tar paper.

NOGUCHI: So when he arrived--when your father arrived in Tule Lake, then he came in as a . . .

FIELD: He was the head of the elementary schools.

NOGUCHI: Head of the elementary schools.

FIELD: I think there were about four or five. He liked it except he had pea pie for supper one night--for dinner. Then I think what happened was that after registration--well, after they attempted to recruit and after registration and all that went on. I think several other Caucasians decided to leave because the head of the high school, the principal, Mr. Wilder, left. And my dad went in as the principal of the high school. And I don't know how long he was the principal of the high school. I hope he wasn't in the administration when the part about the stockades took place. I don't think he was because that really flipped me. And if you haven't a copy of *Years of Infamy*, she has the best research--Mrs. Michi Whalen?

NOGUCHI: Michi Weglyn.

FIELD: Yes, Weglyn, whatever. And there's a letter from my mother to me after someone had read this article in the *Reader's Digest*, and all she said to me was, "Americans aren't perfect." And I said, "No, we are not perfect." The only person on earth who was perfect was Jesus Christ and they crucified him.

W.FIELD; It doesn't pay to be perfect. [CHUCKLES]

FIELD: No. I just was taken aback. And my mother has written--she said she must not know much about American history and then all the things that we had done. But we certainly weren't perfect. Guns that were sold by

our nation. So at any rate, back to when I got to Tule Lake High School.

Oh, yes. I got there and they told me I'd be going to school on Monday, and I said, "Why? The camp schools don't start until about the 14th of September." They said, the Project Director--at that time I didn't even know the man's name, and I don't know if it is Mr.[Harvey M.] Coverly or not--has ruled that all Caucasian girls have to go to the Tule Lake High School. They cannot go to the camp high school--Tri-State High School. So at that time Tule Lake was in Modoc County, and the high school was in Siskiyou County. I don't know how they worked it out but first I went to school by bus. Then we went with the Captain's daughter. Captain [Verne]Austin who later became Lt. Colonel Austin. Then finally we rode on the "recon"--the mail truck. We always got there late and froze to death in the back of that truck although it was covered with a sort of . . .

NOGUCHI: Canvass.

FIELD: Canvass, yes.

NOGUCHI: Yes, tarp.

FIELD: Yes, tarp.

NOGUCHI: Tule Lake High School--was that located in Newell?

FIELD: No, Tule Lake was located in Newell. The camp itself was Newell.

NOGUCHI: Considered Newell, yes. And so Tule Lake itself was a town about seven
--eight miles . . .

FIELD: Yes.

NOGUCHI: . . . from Newell.

FIELD: Right. They wanted the camp--they thought it would be great and then
when everybody got there, they didn't want it. And we got a very cold
reception when we went into the high school.

NOGUCHI: Oh, you did.

FIELD: And I have . . .

NOGUCHI: Was that when they had both the students and the teachers?

FIELD: The faculty was pretty nice to me.

NOGUCHI: Oh, the faculty was nice.

FIELD: I'm not too sure about the principal but a girl friend and I heard rumors
that we were supposedly behind the high school smoking and I laughed.
We didn't smoke. Was it true that the Japanese believed that Mt. Shasta
was made of Crisco?

NOGUCHI: I never heard of that. [LAUGHTER]

FIELD: And I laughed again. And they always called us "Kids from the Jap
Camp." A little card that I have that we can't find--the cards that they put
in when you graduated from high school. I guess it's over here.

NOGUCHI: So the reaction from your fellow students was that you were involved with the people in Tule Lake.

FIELD: Yes. One wrote, "I'll always remember you from the Jap Camp." And then I wrote essays after that on racial prejudice. My English teacher read that to the other students. And that caused consternation. I wrote a paper that I cannot find which I gave on liberty and justice for all. Because when the flagpole at the Administration Building was dedicated, it was led by a troop of Japanese Nisei Boy Scouts.

NOGUCHI: Yes, it was. I remember that.

FIELD: "With liberty and justice for all." And I looked at this fence, and I looked at them, and I think, this isn't liberty and justice for all. And then I went on to explain. It's been four or five years since I've read this paper, but it's not justice putting citizens behind fences without-- barbed wire--without due process of law. For no reason 120,000 people were evacuated, 80,000 of them were our own citizens.

NOGUCHI: Yes, that's right.

W. FIELD: Including my best friend, Jin Okamoto.

FIELD: You have a letter . . .

W. FIELD: I used to write to him when he was in the camp. My twin brother's best friend was Frank Iwamiya. He also went to camp. I think they both went

to Arkansas--Arizona and then Arkansas. I think Frank Iwamiya stayed in the Chicago area. He's never come back here, but Jin Okamoto lives here in town.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

FIELD: My mother has a former student who lives here, a girl whose name is June Oga. I think she is a friend of Yuzuru's sister. [Yuzuru. has a sister living in San Mateo.] I don't know what her name was--her maiden name was. But my daughter and her daughter went to kindergarten together. Her husband's name was Henry Oga, and he died of cancer a couple of years ago. [Mrs. Oga visited Mrs. Gunderson several weeks ago, but Mrs. Gunderson didn't remember her.]

: But my mother helped her with--in speech because she was embarrassed.

NOGUCHI: Do you recall her name?

FIELD: She was Oga. Capital O-G-A.

NOGUCHI: And her maiden name was Manji? [Yes]

FIELD: I don't know.

NOGUCHI: Henry Oga, I think, worked for the Water Resources as an engineer.

FIELD: I know when I finally got a catalogue of people who graduated from Cal-- Henry Oga had graduated from Cal.

NOGUCHI: He is the one who had a nice smile on his face all the time. Very personable type of person.

FIELD: She's very outgoing.

NOGUCHI: Yes, she was.

FIELD: Her daughter and my daughter were very close friends. When they were in the third grade, they had to go to another school. Schools treat big and June Oga moved Coleen back to the former school. Her daughter is now a registered pharmacist-- has a Ph.D--very bright. Debbie said she used to copy from her papers. [CHUCKLES]

W. FIELD Both of those girls were my students. Also in journalism in Lodi High School.

FIELD: You didn't have Coleen, did you?

W. FIELD: I had Coleen.

FIELD: Now, I've really gotten involved.

NOGUCHI: That's all right. We'll get back to Tule Lake again.

FIELD: This picture is one thing, and it almost needs a magnifying glass. That was put up in a service station in Tule Lake--WRA. It was a big service station. I can't remember what it was. Standard or Flying A.

NOGUCHI: It's a Flying A. I can see the eagle there. Or is it a Richfield or Associated? Now that you mention it.

FIELD: Well, someone in camp came in and took a picture and sent it in to the . . .

W. FIELD: Oh, the Richfield has the wings on it.

FIELD: They sent it in to headquarters. And the sign was removed from the window. But they made it very clear to us that we were not welcome to trade there.

NOGUCHI: I'm holding a picture of a gas station in Tule Lake, California where it says "WRA Personnel Keep Out." So they didn't want people working at the Tule Lake to patronize this gas station.

FIELD: Oh, we were called "Jap Lovers."

NOGUCHI: Oh, you were!

FIELD: Even members of my own family--my dad's older sister had a son who was in Corregidor and he died on the Death March in Bataan. She wrote back to him--my dad--and said, "How could you be comforting the enemy? I'll never forgive you." I don't think she wrote to him again. I met her once--Aunt Anna--a couple of years before she died.

NOGUCHI: Yes, wars will do things like that to even the immediate family, so . . .

FIELD: My mother's side of the family--my aunt and uncle who lived in Oakland never really approved. They thought I was going to fall in love with a Japanese boy and marry him.

W. FIELD: We got even with them. Our daughter married a Filipino boy.

[LAUGHTER]

FIELD: My aunt never said a word. Our granddaughter is--what's the word in Spanish?

W. FIELD: Mestiza.

FIELD: She's half Filipino and half Caucasian.

W. FIELD: But the mother was brought up in the Philippines during the war, and they never said a word about this article in the *Reader's Digest*.

FIELD: I wasn't too thrilled with that because Debbie had been going with a Nisei.

[LAUGHTER]

FIELD: His name was Glenn Nakayama. Her parents were in Tule Lake. But she [our daughter] said, "I really like Steve Adachi." [LAUGHTER]

W. FIELD: Steve Adachi was student body president of Tokay High.

FIELD: And his father was student body president at Tri-State. I asked him once what his dad did, and he said, "My dad was an interpreter." They both had leadership qualities, but Steve was killed in an automobile accident.

W. FIELD: And when I went to Lodi High School as a sophomore, the student body president was a Japanese boy named George Kagawa. Japanese were always very integrated in the Lodi community until World War II.

FIELD: There was so much economic pressure. They don't want any brown students back because they knew that the Nisei farmers could make more.

[END TAPE 1, SIDE 1

[BEGIN TAPE 1, SIDE 2

FIELD: I don't know whether to release these personal items or not but there is lot in here about Richard Tanaka--about his family. But he's CEO [Chief Executive Officer] of a company and he tells about it here. He tells about meeting with the King of Sweden and Mrs. Myrdal. And I need that book back because my mother had her students reading it. Karl [Gunnar] Myrdal's book, and I can't remember the title.

IRITANI: This is Side 2, interviewing Margaret Gunderson . . .

NOGUCHI: Margery Field. Correction. I correct that.

IRITANI: Myrdal was a --there was a Gunnar Myrdal that came out with that book--I forget the title of it --about the race problem here in the United States. I forget the title of it. I'm sorry, go ahead.

FIELD: Do we have a . . .

IRITANI: *Mark of Dilemma*, I think, was the title of the book.

W. FIELD: Well, they were feeling sorry for the black people.

IRITANI: Yes.

FIELD: Richard Tanaka said that he had written about the evacuation.

[Interruption for refreshments]

What Myrdal wrote, my mother had her students read.

IRITANI: It's in that story?

FIELD: Yes.

IRITANI: What was the title of his book that Gunnar Myrdal--was it something like the *American Dilemma*? [*An American Dilemma*, 1944, Classic on Race Relations by Gunnar Myrdal]

FIELD: That's sounds right.

IRITANI: Yes, I think so.

W. FIELD: Then Yuzuru gave a report on Thomas Jefferson in front of Dillon Myer.

NOGUCHI: Oh, he did.

FIELD: And he didn't know whether to say what he thought. It was burning!

Absolutely burning! Afterwards Dillard--Dillon--how is that . . .

NOGUCHI: Dillon Myer.

FIELD: Yeah--came up and shook his hand and said it was great to hear someone talk about democracy who had his own democracy lost. My mother was so thrilled she said, "I couldn't be more thrilled than if you 'd been my son. As far as I'm concerned, you dear kids are my sons. Their relationship was that close. And I think she wanted a son. She is much more fonder of him than she is of me.

IRITANI: [LAUGHTER]

W. FIELD: That's because of the fresh flowers that he sent to her. [LAUGHTER]

FIELD: He'd make jam.

IRITANI: Oh, that's great.

NOGUCHI: If I recall--remember--recall correctly, she was more--paid more attention to the male students than she did the female students. I think she was more partial to the male students.

FIELD: The funny part of it, after she retired from West Side [School District], she went to teach the girls in Juvenile Hall in Fresno.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

FIELD: They looked at her and they said, "Mrs. Gunderson, do you know judo?" "No." "Do you know this type of sport?" "No." "Self defense?" "No." "You aren't afraid of us, are you?" She said, "No." And she had members of the [Charles] Manson gang in there. She said they [girls] are much harder to handle. But, yes, because all the students who come back to see her and who else--kept in touch with her and all of them are boys. I have a letter here from . . .

W. FIELD: [LAUGHTER] You noticed.

FIELD: How can I forget? Albert Tsugawa?

NOGUCHI: Oh, yes, Albert Tsugawa.

FIELD: And he writes a very chatty letter.

NOGUCHI: He was a very chatty person.

FIELD: He amazed me because in the ninth grade he was reading *The New Yorker*. I have been thinking of --at any rate-- all of those were Mr. Noguchi's titles because he tells that they were feeling more sympathy for the blacks than for themselves. And at any rate, Richard Tanaka met with the widow of Myrdal and the King of Sweden. And he tells about it in this letter which also mentions his family. And he did write a letter to me after that Tule Lake Sayonara in May of '92. And he said he hadn't kept up with Japanese Americans--the JACL. And he would have come to that but he didn't know about it, and apparently his--he had a brother who sent in his name because there are so many Richard Tanakas.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

FIELD: And was there another meeting in '94? '96 that he might have been to?

NOGUCHI: I missed that one so. . . . They did have another reunion after that, so . . .

FIELD: He may have come to that.

NOGUCHI: Yes, but he wouldn't . . .

FIELD: Actually, he wanted to know about my mother's health.

NOGUCHI: He was an unusual student that could do two things at once.

[CHUCKLES] He used to amaze me.

FIELD: He was with my aunt and uncle [when they] were on vacation. He was in Richmond. My folks and I were living with my aunt and uncle until my dad got a job with the government after the war. He would come out and we had some game we played. He'd just skim over the rules and he knew how to play that game. I was amazed. He was a Junior Phi Beta, and he and Yukio Uyeno.

NOGUCHI: Uyeno, yes.

FIELD: Both went to Cal.

NOGUCHI: Yukio Uyeno became a pediatrician and about five years ago he passed away. He had the same problem as I have. We have a weak heart and he had his bypass surgery, and being an M. D. [Doctor of Medicine] you would think he would watch his diet, but no, he didn't.

W. FIELD: No, doctors don't do that any better than anyone.
They think they are going to live forever better than other people.

NOGUCHI: Yes, that's right.

FIELD: And I sat with his sister at the Sayonara.
She was married to a former teacher. In *Aquila* I have mentioned the people I knew that I saw in 1992. One I mentioned was Georgette Motomatsu. Her picture is in here. She was a nurse's aide when I was in

the hospital in Tule Lake with a sinus infection. Dr. Hashiba was my doctor.

NOGUCHI: Dr. Hashiba. Now, that is quite a story too about Dr. Hashiba.

W. FIELD: Yes, from what I heard, you're right.

FIELD: After the lights were out, kids would come to my room. They wanted to know about what the outside was like. But they were telling me stories about Dr. Hashiba that amazed me. And all the Caucasian personnel went to him or most of them.

NOGUCHI: Right.

FIELD: A Caucasian doctor came by--"What's wrong with you?" [LAUGHTER] "Why are you in here so long?" Well, if we hadn't had penicillin, which my dad had gotten from the Army, and he had given me about 15 sharp washes through my sinus cavity and then penicillin injections every three hours for eight days. And I guess it was paid, free injections after that.

W. FIELD: I guess not. You report a porcupine in reverse.

FIELD: And the kids would tell me, "Now there's Dr. So and So. He has renounced. There's Miss So and So--she's renounced." One nurse I met I said, "Oh, I see you have a Cal hat on." because nurses who went to UCSF [University of California, San Francisco] wore the mortar board with the blue and gold.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

FIELD: Not ribbons. Have you seen them?

IRITANI: Tassles.

NOGUCHI: Tassles, yes.

FIELD: I talked to her and she said, "Hello, Miss Gunderson." I said, "So and So talked to me , Dad." and he said, "You're lucky, she barely talks to Caucasians." But I would go through those sharp washes and my eyes wouldn't tear, and the first one I went through, fifteen people stood up and watched me go through it. And I wasn't going to show pain. I probably showed more when they stuck the stuff in my arm. Well, that's off the beaten subject--beaten path, I guess.

W. FIELD: If you can keep her on the beaten path, you are a miracle worker.

FIELD: Anyway, that got me up to '45 but I'm still back. Tule Lake didn't like us, but Klamath Falls would take your money.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I was just going to ask you how did the people in Klamath Falls react to personnel that were working at the Tule Lake camp.

FIELD: We would all go in to the Pelican Cafe and get a big table and that's--we would go in every Saturday and Sunday and that is where we would have our dinners. And my mother would go in to shops to get yardage goods because her aide was Fukuyama--John and Susie Fukuyama--it's Susie

Fukuyama. She is a Home Economics major from the University of Washington. She sewed a wedding gown for her friend who married Oliver Noguchi. Did you ever hear of Oliver Noguchi?

NOGUCHI: No, I have the same name but I don't know of any Oliver Noguchi.

FIELD: Maybe it isn't Noguchi. It's . . .

NOGUCHI: There were a couple of other Noguchi families in Tule Lake.

FIELD: No, it's Oliver Noji.

NOGUCHI: Noji. OK.

FIELD: Well, we have a painting behind the door. It used to hang in our living room. You want to bring out the painting from the --it's a beautiful thing. Yes, it's Noji. Now, I've heard of a Jim Noguchi.

NOGUCHI: There were two Noguchi girls-- my sisters were May and Mary. But they were much--or a few years younger than I was.

FIELD: But at any rate this is the picture that he did for me. [A large watercolor.]

NOGUCHI: Oh, my goodness!

IRITANI: Oh, that's tremendous.

NOGUCHI: Isn't that beautiful.

IRITANI: Noji?

FIELD: Noji.

NOGUCHI: So where did . . .

- FIELD: I went to Cal--Oh, I was Valedictorian at Tule Lake High School.
- NOGUCHI: Oh, you were!
- FIELD: I did not have a 4.0 grade average because if it hadn't been for my dad, I wouldn't have gotten through geometry or chemistry or physics. I was great in foreign languages. But I memorized well and all through high school they taught us in San Leandro High that the main game was to pass the English A exam at Cal.
- NOGUCHI: Yes, Uh huh.
- FIELD: Well, I was the one who passed it when I took it at Mt. Shasta High School. Another girl came up the next year from Oakland High School, took it and passed it, and when she met me, she said, "I heard your name so often I didn't even want to meet you. That's all the teachers talk about at Tule Lake High School--Margery Gunderson."
- NOGUCHI: Oh. [LAUGHTER]
- FIELD: I don't think anyone has mentioned my name since then. I have a lot of health problems and I have a prolapse mitral valve--heart--it's my heart. And I used to try to teach with it beating at 200 beats a minute, and one doctor would tell me it's all in my head. Till I had an angiogram.
- W. FIELD: Doctors know it all, don't they?
- NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: Terrific sinus headaches. I mean migraine headaches--I'd be in bed four days at a time. It was so bad that I had to stop teaching. It wasn't fair to the students. They would complain that I was absent too much. I can go from a migraine into what's called paroxysmal tachicardia and that would just wear you out because I had to be hospitalized to revert the heart to normal rhythm. And when I was in the hospital this summer, what do the heart specialists do?

W. FIELD: She gave you an electric shock to make your heart go back to normal rhythm. Then the next day it would go back out again anyway.

FIELD: When the first--the first time they put me on dialysis, one of the things they had to watch out for was whether or not I had a seizure--whether I had a seizure--whether my heart went back to irregular method. Cardiologists said that's important.

NOGUCHI: Oh. So what year did you graduate high school?

FIELD: '43.

NOGUCHI: '43.

FIELD: Yes, I won the White and Gold because I won the contest on the "Liberty and Justice for All," and if I ever find the copy of it, I'll send it to you.

NOGUCHI: Do you recall how your teachers reacted to you personally when you were attending high school in Tule Lake?

FIELD: They were nice. My English teacher told my folks--well, this prize-winning essay went in to Siskiyou County because the White and Gold was made up of all high schools in Siskiyou County, and they had an essay contest and he told my folks right away it won't make it there. A great essay. My Latin teacher gave it "two" then changed it to a "one," and the girl who won the essay contest was Phyllis Snyder, and it was a good essay . . .

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: . . . but mine was all on racial prejudice and how people would learn to hate themselves. I don't think I put down the question of the little Japanese boy who said, "Mother, when are we going to leave Japan?" "Well, let's go home." "I don't like Japan." I remember walking down to the village and there were no fences. You could walk through back and forth where we lived and it was very --pretty easy going. What do I want say? I could move freely. And I would. . . . Little kids would stand out and say, "Hakujin." For the most part, the teachers in Tule Lake were so nice to me and were understanding. And I was going to go back to San Leandro High at the end of the semester, but I think I had written in my diary my folks decided they didn't want me to go. The woman I was going to live with was not well and "You'll be leaving here going to Cal very

soon and then we won't see you anymore." So I stayed at Tule Lake. By that time we moved from a one-bedroom apartment, and I said the camp is nice in here. Camp may have been nice. It wasn't luxurious for Caucasian. It was Hell if you had to be there.

NOGUCHI: That was a green barrack or billet on the other side of the fence?

FIELD: No, they took barracks and made them into houses. I think in here--in December we got into a two-bedroom house.

NOGUCHI: Is that part of the--where the civilians were living? I think the billets were painted green, if I remember, and it was directly across the firebreak from Ward 7 where we were anyway. And Block 66 was the original high school until--the original high school.

FIELD: There is a book put out and I thought I had it --I sent it to my mother--of stories about people who went to various relocation centers and their comments on it. And there are two from Tule Lake High School and they all went to the old high school. And they were all very critical in physics and chemistry. We didn't have any experiments.

NOGUCHI: No.

FIELD: I was taking Physics from the Ag teacher at Tule Lake High School. He certainly didn't have any experiments and half the time he didn't explain the chapters. And I guess my dad helped me with the problems and I

memorized the answers. Of course, the boys were bright enough to figure it out. Knew we were memorizing it.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

W. FIELD: It wasn't much better back at the Caucasian high schools during the war either. There were a lot of fill-in teachers who didn't know what they were doing.

FIELD: Well, one Board Member said, "Oh, you can go down on the street corner on Sacramento Street and get a drunk and have them teach."

W. FIELD: That was here in Lodi.

FIELD: That was here in Lodi. But in Tule Lake they had a Presbyterian Church, and the Christians that were there went down singing--I was a Presbyterian at the time-- and we went to the hospital and sang. This was at Christmas time and I don't describe it well in my diary. After it was over, they paired themselves up and I went to a Japanese mess with one girl and I don't remember her name but I remember the feeling of walking in and being the only Caucasian in that mess. It wasn't that I was afraid--it was just -- you stood out like a sore thumb. And dinner was just about over, and all we got to eat was rice. And I'm not even sure we had milk and after I read, I know there was a food shortage, and I know the man who was in charge of the food for the Japanese was selling it on the black market. They

didn't find out about it until he was killed in an automobile accident. I think he ran into a train.

NOGUCHI: Yes, he did.

W. FIELD: He was probably drunk.

NOGUCHI: Well, one thing that they did describe--of course, I was a youngster then but if I recall correctly, the train hit the car, and he had the supply of meat that was supposed to go to the people in camp was in the back--the trunk of his car, and they couldn't tell the difference whether it was the beef or his body that they were trying to separate for the coroner.

W. FIELD: Oh, my gosh. [LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: That's how bad it was. But I can't remember the man's name but . . .

W. FIELD: He got what he deserved.

FIELD: When I was going back to Cal for Christmas vacation, he took me to breakfast.

NOGUCHI: And it did happen. The railroad crossing . . .

W. FIELD: Sounds perfect.

NOGUCHI: That was quite a story that . . .

W. FIELD: I bet it was.

NOGUCHI: It probably didn't get out of that area but it did happen.

W.FIELD I'll bet.

- .FIELD: What was I reading about \$45,000 worth of whiskey going to Tule Lake?
[LAUGHTER]
- FIELD: The town of Tule Lake. Oh, I don't know. These West Coast newspapers--the Hearst newspapers--I'm not sure you could trust anything.
- W. FIELD: Hearst was always anti-Japanese and . . .
- NOGUCHI: Yes, it was.
- W. FIELD: Hearst people were always traditionally . . .
- IRITANI: Well, at *Denver Post*-- that was bad too.
- W. FIELD: I wouldn't be surprised.
- IRITANI: I grew up there, you know, and they were saying that the people in Heart Mountain got all the butter they wanted and tires and gasoline, which were rationed during that time. Sorry to interrupt you.
- NOGUCHI: No, that's all right. By the time the segregation was taking place, you were attending Berkeley?
- FIELD: I did read about it.
- NOGUCHI: What do you recall?
- FIELD: I remember--well, first of all, the Army went in to recruit.
- NOGUCHI: Yes.
- FIELD: Then they decided to have registration. And those questions were terrible. And a group of people went in and asked for clarification of the questions.

And I think the Project Director was Coverly at that time. He didn't like the attitude of the people who were addressing him. And I think he wouldn't answer the questions. They had the [answers] written out and mimeographed. They were simplified answers which did not please the . .

W. FIELD: Protesters.

FIELD: . . . the protesters at all. And somehow, the Army got--went in and I saw it, as I said in my diary, they went in and picked up 35 Nisei people--men. Most of them were age 17 and under--well, you had to be 17 to answer--and took them. According to this one book, they took them to the County Seat of Alturas . . .

NOGUCHI: Alturas, Uh huh.

FIELD: . . . which is a long way away and a couple of--and I say--which was pretty scary. A couple of pages later I've written they took--and at that time I wrote "Japs" and I've been taught to write "Japanese." On one side I'm writing about the enemy. They took them to Shangri-la. Where Shangri-la was I have no idea. I didn't explain it in my diary. I never expected that anyone would read this diary except me. And as I went back and read it before I talked to Jack Fincher. It's superficial. I really didn't tell my gut feelings. I was not used to expressing my gut feelings. I hadn't been to a

psychiatrist yet. I hadn't gone into depression, for that I had to. But I was a stoic--I was a Norwegian stoic.

NOGUCHI: We have a tendency to be stoic too.

W. FIELD: I've heard of that.

NOGUCHI: Very stoic. [LAUGHTER] So all this problem in Tule Lake erupted after segregation, and I think the brunt of all that took place fell on the shoulders of your father.

FIELD: I can't see . . .

NOGUCHI: I think if it hadn't been for him we would not have survived the whole incident there. It was your father that probably kept the peace and tried to understand what the Japanese people were doing in camp and trying to get their side across to the civilians there that were running the camp.

FIELD: Well, the reason that he was selected as Assistant Project Director instead of Superintendent Harkness was that he was a negotiator. He'd negotiate with the Army and, believe me, they needed negotiation.

And the WRA and I think that Raymond Best --I can't say the word for him. My mother thought he did the best. According to Weglyn, he was a Marine in WW 1. He had already been in two camps where they interned people. Unless--there are maps in here. They were in Arizona, but they were camps specially set up for interned Japanese. And I guess he had

trouble there and he laid down the law. To me, he wouldn't bend his back to negotiate. And this Coverly--someone was killed and he wouldn't go to his funeral, and I think that was a slap in the face to the Japanese. And I can't determine whether the accident that happened happened in an agricultural accident in which someone died or on a tractor.

NOGUCHI: Well, what happened originally was the truck driver refused while he--the sentry at the post--at the main gate--asked the driver for his pass to get out of camp because segregation meant very tight security.

FIELD: Yes.

NOGUCHI: And I guess his attitude wasn't what the soldier thought was proper. He told the driver to get out of the truck. And when he did so, he fell on top of the soldier there. The soldier became very angry and he shot him right through the abdomen.

FIELD: He killed him.

NOGUCHI: That's when all Hell broke loose there.

FIELD: The soldiers weren't bright. Most of them couldn't read.

NOGUCHI: Oh, yes, that was one of the main problems was that he couldn't read so he told the guy to get out of the truck. He had to show his authority too. And the road that was leading to the farm--which was a very productive farm--the roads were deteriorating real bad and one of the trucks turned over and

quite a few of the laborers that were going out to the farm were hurt and so they asked the Project Director to fix the roads; otherwise, "We won't go out." And he said "No."

FIELD: That was Coverly?

NOGUCHI: Yes, at that time. And that's when all Hell broke loose.

[End Tape 1, Side 2]

[Begin Tape 2, Side 1]

FIELD: And it was true that was murder.

NOGUCHI: Yes. He was running the campaign there at the . . .

FIELD: Did they ever find who murdered . . .

NOGUCHI: They never did.

FIELD: Well, they . . .

NOGUCHI: Ron and I were supposed to share a room at Berkeley when the Korean War broke out, and I was one of the first ones to be drafted into the[war]. And so he went on to Berkeley and I stayed back after that and went to Sac State University [California State University, Sacramento].

FIELD: How did Ron do in Berkeley because he didn't do anything in Spanish?

[LAUGHTER]

FIELD: He surprised me because . . .

W. FIELD: There were stories on . . .

NOGUCHI: Because of his talent, he did very well, and he was one of the outstanding students of our class anyway, that he had a very thriving business and he is now retired.

FIELD: Beautiful art work in one of these.

NOGUCHI: He was just a natural talented artist.

FIELD: They would try, and as a teacher I thought why didn't you teach those children how to study because they really were A's or B's, and I would hit them and here they were--they knew Japanese. When I went in there the teacher had them reading Spanish. If you speak Japanese you know what I mean--[they have] practically a native ability to speak Spanish.

NOGUCHI: That's right. People had a . . .

FIELD: And I said, "Well, we're going to translate Spanish into English." They went, "Oh." The first day I went in they all sat in the back of the room. And I stood there and I said, "Will you please move up." Nobody moved. [LAUGHTER] And I sat there and I said, "Please move up." And then out of the blue, I said, "I promise I won't bite." [LAUGHTER] They all moved up. They all gave me very good reports in Spanish. They gave me oral reports. I had a boy there who had been to Berkeley and he spoke in Spanish. And I didn't know that it was optional to go to high school

because there were Japanese language schools. Richard Tanaka was kicked out of it because he asked too many questions. [LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

FIELD: Now, backwards, have I told you the story. But Ron Hitomi I remember and his cousin, Dick . . .

NOGUCHI: Dick.

FIELD: . . . and I wondered whatever happened. Why was that? And did the wall ever fall on anybody during construction?

NOGUCHI: You know, the fact that you mention that, I vaguely recall something like that happening that way.

FIELD: I don't have anything in my diary because on July 4 I have something written in 1942. July 5, I've written "First day of college." and nothing from then on.

NOGUCHI: Oh.

FIELD: But I did see them go in and take the 35 Japanese. I knew more were taken. I knew they made raids at nights until they started fighting people. It's just me. I used to drive the principal nuts. My desk was always messy. I drive people crazy because my bed is always messy.

W.FIELD; Her idea of organizing is simple, everything in plain sight--no piles. Everything individually in sight.

NOGUCHI: Yes, some of the people that were taken out of the camp there ended up in Alturas County jail.

FIELD: Yes.

NOGUCHI: And they were ordered to serve 90 days.

And the sheriff there at Alturas County seat asked those fellows, "What are you doing here?" And they were told that they were supposed to serve 90 days. So he says, "Well, I don't have room for you guys."

W. FIELD: [LAUGHTER] I'll bet.

NOGUCHI: The person that went from our Block 73, Henry Omi--he didn't know what the inside of the jail really looked like because they made him a trustee and all he did was to buy the food for the inmates in the town of Alturas and brought them their breakfast, lunch and dinner. And that was his 90 days that he served was doing that.

W. FIELD: [LAUGHTER] The food was probably better in jail.

FIELD: The people in Alturas-- they didn't know.

NOGUCHI: No, they didn't. They just looked at him as if he was an inmate in the Alturas County jail. They didn't ask why or anything.

FIELD: I know when we had veterans who wouldn't be served after they got back from Europe.

NOGUCHI: That's right.

W. FIELD: Incredible!. The whole thing was incredible.

FIELD: Oh, and they got somebody from camp--and they took him into a hotel in Tule Lake and he ratted on everybody else which, I think, was rotten. And then they put him back in camp. And I think later on he wound up in the stockade. That stockade mess. . . . Was my dad Project Director then?

NOGUCHI: No, I think he was the Assistant Project Director.

FIELD: That's when people went on a hunger strike and they just about died?

NOGUCHI: Yes.

FIELD: Yes, and as I said, when I was in the hospital I had a feeling something had happened to those doctors and nurses-- that had set them against the United States--not the relocation and everything. Evacuation was bad enough. But I had a feeling that something--and in this book there were pictures where [Wayne M.] Collins, the attorney went in.

NOGUCHI: Yes, Uh huh.

FIELD: Yes, he had pictures that he smuggled out of Niseis who were beaten up by the deputies--Caucasian deputies, not the Army. They were under WRA. My dad was supposed to be under that--was supposed to be over that.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

FIELD: I certainly hope . . .

NOGUCHI: I don't think he was personally involved in that. I'm not sure he was even aware of it, because he was so busy trying to negotiate a peaceful settlement between the War Relocation Authority, the Army, and the people that were in camp. But I could still remember the time we all marched on the Administration. We were young kids then. We didn't know any better, but we thought we'd go along anyway.

W. FIELD: Absolutely. To make sure [INAUDIBLE].

NOGUCHI: And then pretty soon we see all these. . . . The four relocation authorities kind of panicked and they brought in ten Army tanks . . .

W. FIELD: Oh, brother!

NOGUCHI: . . . and the whole company of soldiers with 50-caliber machine guns mounted on the jeeps and that's how they delivered our food to us--done by the military.

FIELD: I don't think Lt. Colonel Austin was any genius. The army took over the whole camp for four days. And my dad spent most of that time negotiating between the Army and the Japanese/Americans and the WRA.

NOGUCHI: I think he was the . . .

FIELD: Yes, Austin was the head of . . .

NOGUCHI: . . .the Commandant, yes. Getting back to you, Margery, after you left-- after your family and the war was over and the camp was closed, where did you go from there?

FIELD: My folks went to Oakland and they moved in with my aunt and uncle. Now, my dad did not want to go any places occupied as a conquerer so he didn't want to go to Okinawa. He applied for a job with the government. We waited, we waited, we waited. We got a call from Washington, D. C., that all government jobs had been frozen. By that time it was so close to the opening of school that my dad went out to UC Berkeley [University of California, Berkeley]. There were two openings. One was in Riverbank. One was at Five Points which wasn't even on the map that we had at that time. They went to Five Points. We had a teacherage And I'm telling you that the first time I saw that place--the teacherage was an Army barrack. It was controlled by one light which you turned on when you entered the back door. You went in through several rooms until you got to what was later my folks' bedroom, the living room and the kitchen combined. It took my mother three days to clean the stove. This--if you thought Tule Lake was God forsaken, this place was really God forsaken. I went out and sat down on the front steps and cried. And then some place in one of those things is a story of my dad getting the award. There was

one eighth grade school room and several portables. There were sort of teacherages there--apartments. They started out with a very few students. My mother had never seen a cotton plant. They didn't know anything about migrant education. And within a couple of months when it was cotton-picking time they had 200 students. No place to put them. I think they even. . . . At that time, through the Council of Churches, they had built a Methodist Church and they rented the kindergarten from the Methodist Church.

W. FIELD: Space for kindergarten. They were using that church building for classrooms for the next I don't know for how many years. Possibly juggling--the overflow of classes into that church building.

FIELD: And one of the trustees went and turned off the heat. Show them the copy from the *Oakland Tribune* and the one. . . . Have you seen the one from my mother that Yuzuru wrote? At any rate, my dad was able to get enough money to begin to build a new school, and he built a principalship or teacherage. I taught there my first year, although it does not say so on my application.

NOGUCHI: So your mom and dad were both teaching there at the . . .

FIELD: The first year I went, my dad was teaching sixth grade.

NOGUCHI: And your mom?

FIELD: No, my mom. . . . My dad taught seventh and eighth grades. My mother taught sixth grade. My dad could teach third grade. He could go down and have the little kids eating out of his hand. My mother was strictly high school and seventh and eighth. I began teaching sixth grade. I knew my mother. This isn't fair. I don't think I found out one good thing I did from my mother, but I sure found out all the bad things. All the kids in her classs didn't like me. They hated me because I didn't act like a teacher. Until the room got so unruly I decided that was it and I told them, "This is the law." and some kid said. . . . I said, "You're going to behave." This kid looks at me and says, "Who's going to make me!" and I grabbed something off his desk and threw it on my desk, and I said, "I'm going to make you." They all beamed. "She's just like her father." [LAUGHTER] That was after I let the girls lose the volleyball game, their nearest rivalry. That was my fault. I didn't play the game. But I didn't coach them hard enough.

W. FIELD: I was looking over there for that history of West Side School District that your mother wrote.

FIELD: Yes, I was wondering--she got that on her Masters.

W.FIELD: That tells the whole story of everything they had to do, year after year after year.

FIELD: You may have thought . . .

NOGUCHI: How many years were you there at Five Points?

FIELD: One.

NOGUCHI: One year. And your mom and dad?

FIELD: My mother left in 1965, I think, and she had--she moved into Fresno. A box or a little trunk of things that she saved in Tule Lake--all beautiful art work. That trunk never got in to Fresno. And she was sick. It had her medical records and it had my Social Security records because the teacher who took over teaching Spanish, they needed that--said I had done a good job. I haven't seen that book . . .

W. FIELD: It's right here on . . .

FIELD: Maybe I'm sitting on it.

NOGUCHI: So the students there at Five Points were more of Spanish background?

FIELD: Yes.

W. FIELD: Migrant farm workers.

FIELD: Migrant farm workers--kids from Oklahoma. I taught a unit on Mexico and at one point I said, "How many of you in here are Indians?"
Everybody who raised their hands had blue eyes and brown hair--
Cherokee.

NOGUCHI: Cherokee.

FIELD: Oklahoma. And I said, "The rest of you are Mexicans. Don't you know that half of your civilization was made of Indian and. . . ." Of course, the first thing I did when I introduced the unit on Mexico was I asked, "What would you like to learn about Mexico?" They didn't want to learn anything about Mexico. [LAUGHTER] I didn't tell my dad that. I thought what a stupid . . .

NOGUCHI: Did you find . . .

W. FIELD: Did you find that book on . . .

NOGUCHI: . . . difficulty in obtaining your employment or your finding jobs right after you left camp? I think your mother mentioned something to that effect.

FIELD: I went into Tule Lake and tried to apply for a job. I could barely type. I didn't really expect to find a job in Tule Lake. When I went back to Tule Lake and took a semester off, Mary Durkin was going to take me into the elementary school. She was the head of the elementary schools and she wanted me to be a teacher's aide and then the Spanish job came up, but I really didn't expect much in Tule Lake. I didn't really feel I was skilled. . . It was bad enough that I had to sell jewelry at Capwell, Sullivan and Furth after I graduated from Cal. I had a rough time making change and some girl who was very sweet, I think, robbed me of \$75 after I cashed out--

checked all my cash, because they told me my cash register was short. I couldn't imagine how that happened and I offered to pay them back. And they said, "No, we don't do that." About a couple weeks later I went through the section and this girl wasn't there. But, oh, could she sell jewelry. Yes, I just. . . . There was no question when I came to Lodi. No one knew my father.

NOGUCHI: So from Five Point then you [went] to Fresno and then on to Lodi.

FIELD: I was offered a job teaching in Fresno. And I finished my student teaching in the summer. I had already signed a contract with my father.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I see.

FIELD: I did my student teaching in the third grade which was supposed to be the upper grades for them. But the trouble with me in sixth grade--my sixth grade students--was that my sixth grade teacher had been so hard on me. And disciplined me in front of other students, that I couldn't be harsh on my own sixth grade students until I was forced to it. And I didn't want to be just like any other teacher, and the previous teacher before me had had one of the board member's sons stand in the corner, put his nose on the chalk board until he passed out. Well, they didn't get that with me. I will admit taking my [INAUDIBLE].

[LAUGHTER]

NOGUCHI: So what year did you move to Lodi?

FIELD: 1949.

NOGUCHI: Oh, so you've been here since 1949 in Lodi, oh my.

W. FIELD: She's really been stuck in Lodi.

NOGUCHI: This is more or less your home--pretty much your life..

FIELD: A lot of North Dakotans settled in Lodi.

W. FIELD: Most of the people in Lodi moved here over the last ten decades from North or South Dakota.

FIELD: His parents were from South Dakota.

W. FIELD: My parents came to Lodi about 1917.

NOGUCHI: Just to get away from the cold?

W. FIELD: Well, yes, definitely. And I had aunts and uncles who moved here ten years before that. When I was a little kid, I had four sets of aunts and uncles living in Lodi.

FIELD: My dad was in Five Points until he died in 1958--June 24--after one week of a massive heart attack, but he wasn't well. He had spent a week at Stanford [Hospital]. My dad and I were very close. There is a picture in here taken of a secretary at Tule Lake. Was that--do you have a copy of this five years ago? I should go through it all. It is the Martin Luther King Asian American Symposium chaired by Yuzuru, and in it he tells his

own personal story of evacuation up to how he was a "No No Boy" at age 17 in Topaz and all the hectic things he went through. He practically lost his citizenship and I think the only thing that saved him was having my mother as a high school teacher. My mother took all the Kibeis. She said they don't--they aren't welcome in Japan, they aren't welcome here; they can't speak English. Whatever I can do to help them I will, and they all in her room.

IRITANI: I think you sent me a copy of his talk. Martin Luther King Day.

W. FIELD: Yes.

FIELD: Because I've been holding back on that. I didn't know whether to give you his writing--his writing was so good. Most of them have already been published.

NOGUCHI: . Yes.

IRITANI: We're getting him to sign a release so we can include it, you know . . .

NOGUCHI: It was in the Margaret Gunderson--we're trying to get an oral history book as you've seen there made.

FIELD: I haven't had a chance to look at it.

IRITANI: Some of the things that we will be asking for like the photos which will be included in the appendix in the oral history book itself.

FIELD: Oh, the name "John" was my mother's father's name. When Yuzuru asked for a name, she said "John" was the grandfather's name. I don't know what my grandfather's name was. My grandfather came from England when he was in his early twenties and here were the-- girl from a--who she-- I think she came and took the notes, I believe, the minutes of my mother's speech. She said my mother came from Scotland, my mother's relatives came from Scotland, you know. But they came from England and Ireland.

NOGUCHI: Oh, this is a lot of good stuff.

FIELD: I warned Yuzuru--I feel as if I'm betraying Yuzuru. I kept that aside.

IRITANI: I think he will agree to whatever, you know . . .

W. FIELD: I think so too. He'll want you to have it.

FIELD: He's written-- he wrote a letter to--several of these to an Ann Arbor [Michigan] paper

IRITANI: Oh, I see.

FIELD: And we have pictures of him folding cranes. His daughter, Junko, and his wife taught them how to fold cranes. I think they were taken into the classrooms. You know about the cranes in Oregon.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

FIELD: I didn't know there was. . . . Were you aware of the village--excuse me for calling it a village--there were balloon bombs coming over from Japan.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

FIELD: You were?

NOGUCHI: On the coast of parts of Oregon, yes. There was one submarine that made it to the foot of the Golden Gate Bridge too.

W. FIELD: And there was one that fired-shells out . . .

NOGUCHI: Torpedos.

W. FIELD: . . . by Santa Barbara.

NOGUCHI: But these balloons came over--they were supposed to be directed toward California, but because of the weather pattern I guess they misjudged and they ended up in Oregon. And that set a big panic in Oregon.

FIELD: Well, it should have because I knew about it the next day because the girl I went to high school with came, or I went over to her house to talk to her, a Carol Gifford. She said, "My cousin was killed yesterday." She said a Sunday school class went on a picnic and she said, "I don't know what happened but they touched something and everyone was blown up." My dad was taken in by the Army and he had to identify the body. And she said this is all very "hush-hush." I didn't read about it until 1947. I read about the balloons in the *Asian Tribune*. I was surprised when I read Yuzuru mentioning it. I didn't know you had short-wave radios.

NOGUCHI: Well, they took all the short-wave radios away from us, but in about ten minutes they got the short waves working again. They were kind of--they didn't expect the Isseis to be very pragmatic. I mean they can do just about anything anybody else can, and as far as getting a short-wave radio, this is just a matter of getting a few tubes and this and that and they had their short-wave radio going again.

W. FIELD: Sure.

FIELD: He likes to take pictures of mine. When you see the way they fixed up the barracks that they lived in--there are pictures here. And are you familiar with this?

NOGUCHI: Oh, *Born Free and Equal*..

FIELD: The story of that--that should go to Yuzuru. My folks wrote--look in all the book stores. See if you can find *Born Free and Equal*. I went to all the book stores and they didn't have them. One day, I changed my direction, going to watch the foundation for lunch and I went by this book store that sold phi bate notes. In the window I see a copy of the book, *Born Free and Equal*. I went in, asked for a copy, gave them my folks' address, had them mail the book to my folks. I found out later it was a Communist book store.

[LAUGHTER]

FIELD: After this appeared in the *Fresno Bee*, my mother went to a JACL meeting in Fresno, and somehow she and the woman next to her were talking, and the woman said you have a mint copy of *Born Free and Equal*? My mother said, "Yes." I don't know how mint it is, but she didn't know what happened to it. I thought she had given it to Yuzuru. And we went through a sack--a yellow sack. I pick it out and here is *Born Free and Equal*.

IRITANI: I guess that's precious.

NOGUCHI: Yes, it's priceless.

FIELD: And Ansel Adams on the back tells what settings he used for all the pictures. [He didn't look at it.] I read it but I know now that the Army or whoever bought up all the books. He's very pro Nisei.

IRITANI: I've never seen this. I know he put out a lot of photographs.

W. FIELD: Oh, yes, yes.

FIELD: He's very pro Nisei.

IRITANI: How far along are we . . . ?

NOGUCHI: Well, I feel that Margery is getting a little tired and if there is anything that you would like to add to this tape, you are welcome. Any kind of statement or . . .

FIELD: Are you aware that Channel 3 has done reports on trips to Tule Lake?
Channel 3 News.

NOGUCHI: No.

FIELD: They should be available because I saw one of them on Channel 3, I saw my friend, Georgette Motomatsu. She worked in the hospital and it was *Return to Tule Lake*.

IRITANI: We should be able to, we can obtain those.

W. FIELD: I would think so, yes.

FIELD: I hope they saved them . . .

W. FIELD: It's all in their archives . . .

FIELD: . . . because everything you see is all on Manzanar.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: And very little about Tule Lake.

NOGUCHI: Which was the focus of all the things that happened was in Tule Lake.

FIELD: I do have this book to give you. *Nisei* by Hosokawa.

NOGUCHI: Oh, yes.

IRITANI: We all have a copy.

FIELD: Well, Wayne taught journalism--workshops that he used to do in Santa Barbara. And normally I had migraine headaches and couldn't go any place, but I love book stores. And I walked through the bookstores and I saw this thing on sociology and it had things on the Nisei, and I said, "You never knew what happened after you left Tule Lake. Won't you buy some

of those books and read." Why have prejudice? Have you read "Prejudice"? I've had it for years. I read it about four years ago. And did you know that in different camps they changed Question 28.

NOGUCHI: Oh, I didn't know that.

FIELD: And I don't know where I read it, but I've read all 28 of those questions. I couldn't have answered them. I think they were an insult.

NOGUCHI: Well, that's why those two key questions are the ones that we discuss at all the schools. And if you answered, "No, No," then you ended up in Tule Lake. And so my brother being of age, when he went to University of California, Berkeley, he went into the Army. And then when he came back from the Korean War, they reinstated his citizenship.

. [End Tape 2, Side 1]

[Begin Tape 2, Side 2]

FIELD: My dad was living with my aunt and uncle, but it was a lot of money. I think Fresno State when I went there was less than \$20.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: And what was Berkeley when you went?

W. FIELD: I haven't the slightest idea. I couldn't remember if I tried.

NOGUCHI: The only thing I remember is the figure of \$85 that he had to pay extra beyond the tuition and that number still stays in my mind.

FIELD: Well, it was money these days.

NOGUCHI: Uh huh.

FIELD: But I didn't join sororities or fraternities--I didn't believe in that because they had a position on racial policy. They wouldn't allow orientals to join their fraternity. They were. . . . The newest president is on my desk. The newest president of the California Alumni Association is a Nisei. Her name is Irene Miura, I believe. There's an article about her--what did I start to say, but. . . . When she was in college she couldn't join sororities. She was head yell leader. But now she's president of the whole alumni.

NOGUCHI: Oh, my goodness.

W. FIELD: Well, thank God things are changing.

NOGUCHI: Yes.

W. FIELD: Little by little by little.

NOGUCHI: So are you involved in any activities because of your health or are you pretty much limited to your home?

: I would like to kind of wrap this up for you, and when the manuscript is typed up, then you will have a chance to review it. And if there are any changes you would like to make, then we will give you instructions as to how it should be done so as to follow the requirements of the oral history project. So, at this time, on behalf of the Florin JACL, the California

State University, Sacramento; Frank Iritani, and myself, we would like to thank you, Wayne Field and Margery Field, who we interviewed this morning in Lodi. We would like to thank you very very much for your time and your thoughts, and we hope that the oral history project--the book will justify all of the things you have done in the past and I will conclude it at this time.

FIELD: I didn't tell you I was called the "Tule Riot" at Wesley Foundation [at Berkeley].

[LAUGHTER]

FIELD: Everytime the paper came out, "Tule Riot"--I was the "Tule Riot." I was there with Jack Harkness who was the son of the Superintendent of Schools. He was a pre-med--a missionary's son. They lost two sons in Africa and their daughter in South Dakota. And the [Guy W.] Cooks, you know, had Hubert Humphrey. They were from South Dakota and they had Hubert Humphrey as a student.

IRITANI: Oh, he was--he was from his home town?

W. FIELD: Hubert Humphrey.

IRITANI: He went on to Minnesota to become a mayor.

FIELD: Yes, that's where most of my relatives were from, North Dakota.

IRITANI: I spent two years while I was with the MIS to begin with and then I went back and graduated from University of Minnesota in 1948 so it was quite a few years ago. [CHUCKLES] Well, we'll cut it off here.

[End Tape 2, Side 2]

Gunderson, Margery
3-5-43
English IV Per 5

"With Liberty and Justice for all"

The tall, stately flag pole swayed majestically and gleamed in the morning sun as though anticipating its dedication ceremony. The crowd stood expectantly awaiting the beginning of the ceremony. Then up, up, up, went the banner as the stars and stripes unfurled in the morning breeze. A proud and erect Japanese Boy Scout arose to lead the throng in the pledge of allegiance. The words of this oath were so familiar that I said them almost without thinking. Suddenly with painful realization, I uttered the last few words - "With liberty and justice for all."

How inappropriate these words were! As I looked about me, I could see the barbed-wire fence stretching as far as the eye could see. This surely was not a symbol of liberty. Looking at the mass of upturned faces, I began to realize the injustice of putting loyal

citizens with disloyal. Watching the little children, I thought of the injustice of deliberately exposing them to the unscrupulous pro-Axis Japanese. What future is there for them? What kind of citizens will they be? There is no escape for them, because, enclosing them is a forboding barbed-wire. To attempt escape would mean death or imprisonment.

The placing of loyal American-born Japanese citizens with disloyal Japanese has made the loyal people lose faith in themselves. Many have never lived around Japanese before and within them now burns a hatred for their fellow Japanese as well as their own yellow coloring. They have been mistreated by their fellow Caucasian Americans. Many never received the absentee voter's ballot ~~form~~ which they had applied. Many never received more than a down payment on the property they sold. Even those who received the

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total sum had to sell their property at drastic reductions. These mistreatments have had a narrowing effect upon their minds. They think only of their own small grievances instead of the peril of their nation as well as the sacrifices our soldiers are making for them. Even those who came to this camp feeling that this was a way of showing their loyalty are beginning to be dubious. To lament now is like crying over spilt milk.

With the recent registration of citizens and aliens, matters came to a crucial point. Two Christian ministers were beaten because they preached allegiance to the United States. They were beaten because they had used their right to preach what they believed. This act of violence was certainly not American, yet it happened here. Steps have been taken to remove the agitators.

ars; but, nevertheless, we cannot overlook the fact that such an undemocratic thing has happened. This was not liberty nor justice toward all.

Once long ago, Thomas Jefferson, in another time of strife, wrote: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Unless we teach racial appreciation, that is; unless we teach and feel that we, Caucasians, are on an equal basis with the Japanese, Chinese, Negro, And Hindu, the ideals for which our forefathers fought and died have been maintained in vain.

There has always been danger of hatred of the minority, because they are unlike the majority. Everett Dean Martin in his book, "Liberty," said: "Throughout history

Gunderson, Margery

3-5-43

English IV Per. 5

"With Liberty and Justice for all"

there has been a classless psychological class struggle between the 'mentally' mature and those who have never grown up. "Those who have never grown up hate the Japanese, Germans, and Italians. So hate is dangerous. It is like a disease that begins and gradually spreads until it has become so grave it can never be cured.

Anyone who hates never hates ^{a single} ~~one~~ person or race, but always ^{several} ~~several~~ persons or races. Soon ^{he} ~~he~~ hates everyone, including himself. There can be no justice for all when the world is filled with hatred. There can be no hope of a lasting world peace unless there is a brotherly love instilled in the heart of every individual. The truth of this democratic ideal - "with liberty and justice for all." stands upon the solution of the problem of racial discrimination.

"America! America!"

December 25, 1945

Dear Yuzuru,

In the past year it has been a delightful experience to watch you break the chrysalis of modest bashfulness and to see the wings of your confident spirit soar to greater heights.

Goodness! Do you realize how much you perplexed me last December when you refused to act as chairman? My hopes crashed and were dashed against the rocks of dark despair. It just hadn't happened to me before and I wondered wherein I had failed. I was panic-stricken for fear you'd ask to transfer. (Now, isn't this a confession to make?) Since then I have had the superlative pleasure

let me add more - please! If you were my
own, I'd be so proud of you that I'd sure fill
your heart with joy! Sincerely, Margaret Gunderson.

of working with you. Not until you teach
will you realize what I mean.

Yes - a year has gone by and you
have advanced, socially ^{too}. Always
keep that sparkle of keen interest in your
eye!! I don't have to tell you to have faith -
nor to be true to yourself because you are.

May I quote from Bliss Carmen's poem,
"Not Mine"? It sums up true ideals of service.

"And if I share my crust, as common
manhood must, with one whose need
is greater than my own,

"Shall I not also give his soul that it may live,
Of the abundant pleasures I have known?"

"And so, if I have wrought, amassed, or
conceived aught of beauty, intelligence or power,
It is not mine to hoard."

"It stands there to afford
Its generous service simply as a flower."

You know I wish for you the fulfillment
of your ideals. Could one wish more? If a person
wishes that - he should rank with the saints. However
do not retreat from the world - it needs you.

(from Takeshita's autograph book--entry by Margaret Gunderson)

A Belated 'Thank You' to a Special Teacher

Editor's Note: The following letter from Yuzuru J. Takeshita, professor in the department of health behavior and health education of the School of Public Health, University of Michigan, came with a request from Dr. Takeshita — that it be published on or near Thanksgiving Day.

In his request he stated, "I have long felt that people like Mrs. Gunderson never received the recognition they deserved (though they would be the last to expect it) for what they did for us who were of school age during the war.

There is living quietly in Fresno, California, a retired school teacher named Mrs. Margaret Gunderson. This letter is dedicated to her, on this traditional Day of Thanksgiving, from a student who was inspired by her some 40 years ago at a high school in an American concentration camp in northern California.

An American citizen of Japanese ancestry, I was incarcerated behind barbed-wire fences for four years, along with thousands of others of similar background who lived on the West Coast when war broke out in the Pacific in 1941. Mrs. Gunderson, with her husband, had given up her teaching post in the San Francisco Bay Area and joined the teaching staff at a high school in one of the 10 concentration camps, because, I think, she believed, we as Americans deserved the best in public education that America could offer in spite of, or maybe because of, the fact that we were there as victims of the American system gone awry.

She was my home-room and U.S. history teacher during my last two years in high school, which I entered and graduated from in camp. In high school, we were a rebellious bunch, confused and angered by what was perceived to be a betrayal of an implicit trust we had in the system we had learned in civic

courses earlier to cherish and defend as the best hope for the world apparently gone amok in the '30s and the '40s, for it was based on the principles of justice and liberty for all.

Mrs. Gunderson took our inevitable cynicism in stride, with genuine sympathy, but, through her lectures on early American history, which revealed her strong faith in the essential goodness of the American way, slowly converted many of us into true believers, once again, of the basic tenets on which this nation of ours was built.

I can still hear her words: "Democracy is a goal our founding fathers set for us as worthy of diligent pursuit, and its attainment requires that every citizen, whatever the circumstance, stand firm against any encroachment upon it and work hard towards its perfection."

It was in this spirit that she had us read Gunnar Myrdal's *American Dilemma*, just published then, and convinced us that we had indeed a long way to go in fulfilling our nation's ideal. Her arguments were so persuasive that we, who were no less a victim of our society's imperfection, found ourselves condemning what we had done to our black brethren!

It was clear to us that her decision to join us in camp was her way of protesting what the system she deeply believed in had done to us. Ironically, I learned more about the true meaning of America, as embodied in our Declaration of Independence and our Bill of Rights, in a high school behind barbed-wire fences, with our basic civil rights temporarily denied, than, I am convinced, had this incarceration, which forced us to grapple with the fundamental issues of what it means to be an American, not occurred and, most importantly, had I not had the guidance and inspiration of Mrs. Gunderson as my teacher at that time.

She may remember the book report I presented on Thomas Jefferson on the very day Mr. Dillon S. Myer, director of the War Relocation Authority that

oversaw the camps, visited our class. He shook my hands with tears in his eyes because, as he related to her later, he was touched by the expression of faith in the system by one betrayed by it.

Those were dark days, with the future of our place in our own country uncertain, but Mrs. Gunderson gave us hope in our daily classes that, in spite of what had happened to us (and she was a severe critic of that), the American system has the potential of fulfilling every freedom-loving person's dream if he or she is but willing to work incessantly towards its perfection.

Instead of feeling sorry for ourselves, we were challenged to do something about it.

She recently wrote me: "You can take the teacher out of the classroom, but you can't take the classroom out of the teacher."

As a student whose outlook on life in America changed from utter despair and cynicism to responsible optimism and commitment to the protection of civil rights, no matter whose, influenced by an inspiring teacher, I would like to say to Mrs. Gunderson: "You can take the teacher out of the classroom, but you can't take her out of the student whose life she changed."

A belated expression of gratitude long overdue but no less sincere, let me say publicly through this letter: "Thank you ever so much, Mrs. Gunderson, on this Day of Thanksgiving. You lit in those darkest hours a flame that still burns in me as strongly today as it did some 40 years ago in my youth. You made a difference in my life!"

I would like to sign this letter with the name she gave me at the end of the war, after a grandfather she adored, and send a prayer from afar for her continued health and happiness.

John Takeshita, Ph. D.
Professor

University of Michigan
(Tri-State High School Class of '45)

NAMES LIST
 Florin Japanese American Citizens League
 Oral History Project

Interviewee: **MARGERY GUNDERSON FIELD and
 WAYNE FIELD**

Interviewers: Frank Iritani and Kinya Noguchi

Cooperative Institution: Oral History Program
 Center for California Studies
 California State University
 Sacramento, California

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